

## UNIFORM WITH THIS VOLUME.

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 REMINISCENCES. *Sir Henry Hawkins.*  
 LIFE OF LORD RUSSELL OF KILLOWEN. *R. Barry O'Brien.*  
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 SOME OLD LOVE STORIES. *Prince Kropotkin.*  
 FIELDS, FACTORIES, AND WORKSHOPS. *Prince Kropotkin.*

*Etc., etc.*

*Others to follow.*

# Life of Lord Lawrence

BY  
H. BOSWORTH SMITH



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# LIFE OF LORD LAWRENCE.

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## CHAPTER I.

EARLY LIFE. 1811-1829.

NOWHERE within the circuit of the British Islands is a more interesting, a more vigorous, or a more strongly marked type of character to be found than among the inhabitants of the North and North-east of Ireland. The people who have sprung from that sturdy mixture of Scotch and Irish blood are not without their conspicuous faults. No race which is at once so vigorous and so mixed is ever free from them. A suspiciousness and caution which often verges on selfishness, an ambition which is as quiet as it is intense, a slow and unlovable calculation of consequences, these are some of the drawbacks which those who know and love them best are willing to admit. On the other hand, there have been found amongst the Scoto-Irish men who, under the most widely different circumstances in Great Britain itself, in that 'Greater Britain' which lies across the Atlantic, and amongst our widely scattered dependencies, last, not least, in that greatest dependency of all, our Indian Empire, have rendered the noblest service to the State as intrepid soldiers, as vigorous administrators, as wise and far-seeing statesmen. Among the Scoto-Irish there have been found men who have combined in their own persons much of the rich humour and the strong affections, the vivacity and the versatility, the genius and the generosity of the typical Irishman, with the patience and the prudence, the devotion and the self-reliance, the stern

morality and the simple faith of the typical Scotchman. In some families one of these national types seems to predominate throughout, almost to the exclusion of the other. In others the members differ much among themselves ; one conforming, mainly, to the Scotch, another to the Irish type of character, although each may manage to retain something which is most distinctive of the other. This last would seem to have been the case with the heretofore little known family which the names of Henry and John Lawrence have made a household word with Englishmen wherever they are to be found, and which, it may safely be predicted, will be loved and honoured, so long as England retains any reverence for what is great and good.

In the wide circle of that illustrious brotherhood which sprung from the marriage of Alexander Lawrence and Letitia Catherine Knox, it is hardly fanciful to say that Henry Lawrence was essentially an Irishman, but with a substratum of those deeper and sterner qualities which we generally consider to be Scotch ; that John was essentially a Scotchman, but possessed also much of what is truly lovable and admirable in the typical Irishman. A study of the character of two gifted brothers, so like and yet so unlike, would have been of deep interest even if it had been the will of Providence that they should have lived and died, as their grandfather had lived and died before them, amidst the petty interests and the monotonous routine of the quiet town of Coleraine. But this was not to be. In the strange vicissitudes of human fortune, the two brothers, differing widely as they did in aptitudes and temperament, and separated from each other in very early life, were brought together again in India : the one from the Army, the other from the Civil Service, to sit at the same Council Board, and to rule in concert that huge and warlike province which, a year or two before, had seemed to threaten the very existence of our Indian Empire. They were to rule that huge province, in spite of their mutual differences, with unbroken success. When, at last, the differences became unbearable, like the patriarch of old and his younger relative, they were to 'agree to differ,' each going on his different path, but still united, each to each, in their purity of purpose, in their simplicity of character, and in their love

for the people of India; each appreciating the other's gifts, each doing full justice to the other's aims, and each retaining, as it will be my happiness to show, in spite of many heartburnings, his brotherly affection for the other to the very end.

Each was to be called off in a measure, or for the time, from his proper calling. The elder brother, the ardent artilleryman, was, in comparatively early life, to drop the soldier and to take to civil work, and after living to be named, should he survive Lord Canning, the provisional Governor-General of India, was destined, while defending against desperate odds the capital of his province, to die at last a soldier's death, beloved as no Englishman in India has been beloved before or since.

The younger brother, who had been born a soldier, but whom Providence or Fate had willed should be a civilian, was destined, during his brilliant government of the Punjab, to do more in the hour of our utmost peril than any mere soldier could have done; to tell some of the bravest generals that what they thought impossible he would make possible; to call forth armed men, as it were, by thousands from the ground, and to launch them, one after the other, at that distant spot where his insight told him that an empire must be lost or won; then, to rule the empire he had done so much to save; and, last of all, to die in a ripe old age, surrounded by those most dear to him, and to be buried, amidst the regrets of a nation, in Westminster Abbey, honoured, perhaps, as no Anglo-Indian has before been honoured; a man who never swam with the stream, who bravely strove to stem the current, and, regardless alike of popular and of aristocratic favour, pleaded with his latest breath for what he thought to be right and just. To the biography of men whose lives have been so strangely chequered, of men who have not so much made history as become, as it were, a history in themselves, belongs of inherent right the highest interest and importance alike of history and of biography.

The life of the elder brother has been long since written, in the greater part at least, by one who knew him well. It has fallen to my lot, under disadvantages which neither I nor my readers are likely to undervalue, to attempt the



biography of the younger. During the more eventful period of Lord Lawrence's life, I knew him only, as most Englishmen know him now, from his deeds. But during his last few years, it was my happiness to know him well; and I am speaking the simple truth when I say that, to converse with a man who had done such deeds, and yet seemed so utterly unconscious of them; who had such vast stores of Indian knowledge, and yet gave them forth as though he were a learner rather than a teacher; who was brave and strong and rough as a giant, but tender as a woman and simple as a child, seemed to me then, and seems still, to have been a privilege for which, if one was not a great deal the better, one would deserve to be a great deal the worse. If I am able to describe John Lawrence in any degree as I have often seen him, and as I trust a careful study of his voluminous correspondence, and the help, given freely to me in conversation by his relations, his friends, and his opponents, have revealed him to me, I shall not have written in vain. With greater skill, with much greater knowledge, his biography might, undoubtedly, have been written by one and by another who, unlike myself, had known him throughout his life, and who have perhaps a knowledge of India only less than John Lawrence himself; but I venture to think that it could scarcely have been written by any one with a keener sense of responsibility or with a more genuine enthusiasm.

The father of John Lawrence was just such a man, and had lived just such a life, as might have been expected of the father of such a son. His life had been one continuous struggle with an unkind fate. Hairbreadth escapes, moving accidents by flood and field; brave deeds innumerable, often handsomely acknowledged by his superiors, but requited scantily or not at all; the seeds of disease sown by exposure and by his many wounds; the prolonged pinch of poverty; a keen sense of slighted merit, and a spirit naturally proud, yet compelled to stoop to ask as a favour what he felt to be his right, and to remind his employers of deserts of which they should rather have been the first to remind him: these and other elements of the kind go to make up the tragedy of his hard and weather-beaten life.

He was fortunate in one thing only, that he had sons whose deeds were destined to be better requited than his had been, and whose lives, enshrined in the memories of their grateful countrymen, have compelled, and, it may be, will, to all future time, compel them, to inquire what manner of man was the father from whom they came.

Sir Herbert Edwardes, in his life of Sir Henry Lawrence, has preserved the long roll of Alexander Lawrence's services, recorded chiefly by his own indignant pen. It is unnecessary, therefore, here to do more than glance at them. Left an orphan, at the early age of ten, to the care of his sisters at Coleraine, Alexander Lawrence, impatient of restraint and athirst for adventure, went off in his seventeenth year, without a commission, as a volunteer to India. It was four full years before he was allowed to purchase the commission which his merits had long since won. But in those four years he had managed to see as much active service in the field and to receive as many hard knocks as would have entitled him, nowadays, to hasten home to receive a dozen swords of honour, and a dozen addresses of congratulation at a dozen public dinners. As a lieutenant, he fought and distinguished himself near Seringapatam, at Cochin, at Colombo, at the Canote river, and in the battle of Sedaseer. Finally, at the famous storming of Seringapatam, he had a full opportunity of showing the stuff of which he was made.

On May 4, 1799, he volunteered, with three other lieutenants, to lead the forlorn hope at the storming of Tippu Sultan's famous capital. Of these four, he was the one survivor, and it was not his fault that he was so. When he reached the top of the glacis he received a ball in his arm, which he carried with him to his grave. But observing that his men were standing still to form and fire when they ought to have been rushing in, he ran forward, wounded as he was, 'from right to left of the rear rank of the forlorn hope, hurrahing to them to move on.' When this had no effect, he ran through their files to the front, calling out, 'Now is the time for the breach!' On reaching the foot of the breach, he received a second ball, which carried off one finger, and shattered another into several pieces. But, even so, he did not give in till he had seen his men carry the breach. Then, fainting from loss of blood, he fell down

where he was and lay scarcely sensible, under the fiery mid-day sun of May, till one of the soldiers of his own regiment, when the fighting was over, came strolling over the spot, and, recognising the uniform on what he supposed to be a dead man, turned his body over. Seeing who it was, and observing that there was some life 'in the old dog yet,' he carried him off, as best he could, on his shoulders to the camp, swearing, as he toiled along, that he would not do as much for any other man of them.\*

It is unnecessary to follow further his military career. In one of his earlier campaigns, by lying on the wet ground at night, he had caught a fever, which gave him, at intervals, throughout the rest of his life many rough reminders; and, in 1809, he returned to England after fifteen years' hard service, broken down in health and still only a regimental captain. His merits procured him one or two appointments in England, and, as Lieutenant-Colonel of a veteran battalion at Ostend in 1815 he must have been within earshot of the cannonade at Waterloo; a privilege exasperating enough to the man who had stormed the breach at Seringapatam, and now in vain petitioned to be sent to the front. When, at last, he was driven to sell his commission for fear that, if he died, as then seemed likely, the price of it—the only worldly property he possessed—would be lost to his family, he obtained a pension of 100*l.* a year for his wounds, a pittance which, as he grimly remarked, would do little more than pay his doctors! This pension, it is pleasant or painful to add, was, not without frequent petitions from himself, afterwards considerably increased, and the old hero did not die until he had sent forth in succession five sons, all of the same sterling metal as himself, to the country to which he had given his life.

One incident only of his life in England requires to be mentioned here. In the year 1809, shortly, that is, after he returned from India, he became Major of his regiment, the 19th Foot, which was, then or soon afterwards, quartered at the small town of Richmond, in Yorkshire, and it was while he was living here, on March 4, 1811, that John Laird Mair, the sixth of his sons and the eighth of his children, was born. What wonder that, some fifty years later,

\* *Life of Sir Henry Lawrence*, by Sir Herbert Edwardes, vol. i. pp. 4-6.

when Sir John Lawrence was returning home after the Mutiny, with his honours thick upon him, thinking, as well he might, that his career was over and that he had earned his repose, he told a trusted friend, with a tinge of sadness, that one of his first visits would be to the place which had given him birth? What wonder, either, that the accident of his birth at an English town tempted more than one English statesman in the first burst of the national grief at Lord Lawrence's death to claim the great Scoto-Irishman as, in part at least, their own, and to point out in eloquent language that he had combined in his person the best social and moral characteristics of the British Islands—Irish boldness, Scotch caution, and English endurance?

But what of John Lawrence's mother? What was her character, and what share had she in the moulding of her son? Here again we are not left to surmise or inference alone. For Sir Herbert Edwardes quotes an account of her given him in after years by 'one of her sons,' whom I have no hesitation in pronouncing, from internal evidence, to have been John Lawrence himself. 'I should say,' he writes, 'that, on the whole, we derived most of our metal from our father. Both my father and mother possessed much character. She had great administrative qualities. She kept the family together, and brought us all up on very slender means. She kept the purse, and managed all domestic affairs. . . . When I was coming out to India, my poor old mother made me a speech somewhat to the following effect:—"I know you don't like advice, so I will not give you much. But pray recollect two things. Don't marry a woman who had not a *good* mother, and don't be too ready to speak your mind. It was the rock on which your father shipwrecked his prospects."

One or two points call for notice here. The mother who spoke thus was a Knox, the daughter of a Donegal clergyman, but descended from the Scotch reformer. She prided herself on her descent; and simple, thrifty, homely, God-fearing as she was, her relation to the reformer was not that of blood alone. She possessed that sound good sense and that steady perseverance which marks so many of the Scotch settlers in Ulster. If John Lawrence was right in supposing that he owed 'most of his metal,' most, that is, of his

courage and his military instincts, of his iron resolution, and his love of adventure, to his father, it is probably not less true, whether he knew it or not, that he owed his shrewd common sense, his hatred of ostentation and of extravagance, and the vein of deep religious feeling, which displayed itself specially in his later life, but underlay the whole of it, to his mother.

Not that her character was especially lovable or tender, or that the home she made would, nowadays, be called a genial or a happy home. The domestic management seems to have been hard and unyielding. There were no luxuries; hardly even were there any of the comforts of life. It could not have been otherwise. The old Colonel's very select library, consisting chiefly of his Josephus and his Rollin, was not such as to supply food for young minds which were either inquisitive of historical fact like that of John, or full of imagination and sentiment like that of Henry Lawrence. More pleasant than the Colonel's library must have been the stories of his adventurous life, told to his children during their country walks. More pleasant still must have been the nursery, where 'old nurse Margaret' ventured, in the children's interest, to break the hard-and-fast rules of diet laid down by the higher authorities for the children's good. Pleasantest of all must have been the gentle influence of that 'Aunt Angel' who, for many years, had her home with the Lawrences, and whose room was the favourite resort of the whole family—one of those beautiful spirits which has learned early in life to sacrifice itself, and is able at last to find its own happiness in nothing but in that of others.

It is almost a truism, that it is a happy thing for all concerned if, in a large family of brothers and sisters, a sister happens to be the eldest. If she is worthy of her place, her influence moulds, softens, checks, refines, elevates. She forms a common centre round which the other members of the family revolve. If they are able to agree in little else, they agree in their trust in her. Such was the lot of the Lawrence family. The eldest son died at the age of three years, the very day on which Letitia was born, as though the brother would make room for the sister, and worthily she filled her place. She had the courage and force

of command of the most famous of her brothers, but she combined with it much of the tenderness and of the softer and subtler influences of woman. She belonged not to that type of woman, a type all too common, who pride themselves on their influence over men, and, content with it, reserve for their own sex what is unattractive and unlovely. Such a woman would have been as hateful to Letitia herself as to her brothers. Her sisters-in-law, some of whom were women of marked character as well as gifted with rare charms, owned her sway, and grudged not the influence which she retained, as of right, over her brothers to the end. She was the adviser and guide of the whole family. Her will was law, not so much because it was a resolute will as because she never sought her own. To her the strongest-minded of her brothers came for advice, as men came to Ahithophel of old, as though they would 'inquire of the oracle of God.' She thus, in large measure, as we shall hereafter see, shaped the destinies of her brothers' lives. In their intercourse with her, their rougher and more tempestuous side seems altogether to have disappeared. They told her every difficulty, shared with her every joy and sorrow, and corresponded with her in the most intimate and unrestrained intercourse until her death.

Such, in outline, was the home and such the home influences on the Lawrence children. It was a locomotive home enough. Richmond from the year 1809, Guernsey from 1812, Ostend in 1815, and Clifton thenceforward to the old Colonel's death; these were the successive headquarters of the family from the time when Alexander Lawrence returned to England from India. In the year 1813 occurred the first considerable break in the family. The three elder sons, Alexander, George, and Henry, were sent off from Guernsey to the 'Free Grammar School of London-derry.' It was situated within the walls of the famous maiden fortress, close to the site of St. Augustine's church, and was under the care of their maternal uncle, the Rev. James Knox. It was then in a transition state, for, in the following year, its governors set an example which the governing bodies of the great schools of London are only now beginning to imitate. They authorised its removal from the interior of the city, and, with the active assistance

of the then Bishop of Derry, Dr. William Knox, they re-erected it on a much more advantageous site.

Here, then, let us leave, for the present, the three elder brothers and see how it was faring meanwhile with their younger brother John. One or two facts only have been preserved about him. His sister Letitia used to relate that her motherly feelings had been first called out towards him when she found him one day crying violently,\* and discovered that a bit of hot coal had, somehow, lodged itself between his cheek and his baby cap-strings, and had inflicted a mark which was to last all his life. Another incident has a more melancholy interest when taken in connection with the calamity which befel him in the latter years of his life ; for it was the shadow of his cross that was to be. When he was about five years old, he had a bad attack of ophthalmia, which obliged him to be kept in a darkened room for a whole year. He would lie on a sofa, holding the hand of his sister or his nurse Margaret, while they read aloud to him. It was their care of him during this period which helped to call forth the devotion he ever afterwards felt for both ; and he would often say, in his later life, that he would be able to recognise any when and anywhere, by its feeling, the hand of either of his kind attendants. Some of his earliest recollections were associated with that eventful year which saw the hundred days' campaign and heard the roar of Waterloo ; and he tells us in a fragment of autobiography which has come into my hands, that, being thrown much upon his father's society owing to the absence of his elder brothers, he used to accompany him in his walks and listen to the stirring tales of his adventurous and ill-requited campaigns. It seems not to have occurred to the disappointed veteran that he might be arousing, by these very tales, within the boy's breast military hopes and aspirations which, one day, he might find it difficult to quench. For he had resolved, in the bitterness of his heart, that no son of his, if he could help it, should join the service which had served him so ill.

When the three elder brothers left Foyle College in 1819, John was brought, for the first time, into the society of his brother Henry, that brother whose life and character were to be so closely connected, and yet to form so strong a contrast to his own. They went together to a Mr. Gough's

school at College Green, Bristol. It was a day school, and John, a 'little urchin,' as he describes himself, 'of eight,' used to trudge along four times a day with unequal steps by the side of his brother Henry, 'a bony powerful boy' of thirteen, over the hill which separates Clifton and Bristol. His sister recollects how, tired out by his walks and his work, he used, in the evenings, to lie at full length upon the hearthrug, preparing his lessons for the following day. One reminiscence of these school-days has already been quoted by Sir Herbert Edwardes in John Lawrence's own words, but it is too authentic a record not to find a place again here :—

I remember, when we were both at school at Bristol, there was a poor Irish usher named O'Flaherty, and he had done something to offend the master of the school, who called up all the boys and got on the table and made us a great speech, in which he denounced poor O'Flaherty as 'a viper he had been harbouring in his bosom;' and he also denounced some one of the boys who had taken O'Flaherty's part as 'an assassin who had deeply wounded him!' I was a little chap then, eight years old, and I did not understand what it was all about; but as I trotted home with Henry, who was then fourteen, I looked up and asked who the 'assassin' was who had 'wounded' the master. Henry very quietly replied, 'I am the assassin.' I remember, too, in connection with this very same row, seeing Henry get up very early one morning (we slept in the same room) and I asked where he was going. He said to Brandon Hill to fight Thomas. Thomas was the bully of the school. I asked if I might go with him and he said, 'Yes, if you like.' I said, 'Who is to be your second?' Henry said, 'You, if you like.' So off we went to Brandon Hill to meet Thomas, but Thomas never came to the rendezvous and we returned with flying colours, and Thomas had to eat humble pie in the school. Henry was naturally a bony muscular fellow, very powerful; but that fever in Burmah seemed to scorch him up, and he remained all the rest of his life very thin and attenuated.

At such a school, discipline was not likely to be of the mildest kind, and the birch was probably the only instrument of moral suasion recognised. At all events, years afterwards, when some one asked Lord Lawrence whether there had been much flogging at his school, he replied, with grim satisfaction and Spartan brevity—and I have pretty well ascertained by the exhaustive method that the school must have been, not Foyle or Wraxall, but College Green—'I was



flogged every day of my life at school except one, and then I was flogged twice.'

The time came for him to pass to a milder rule, and, in 1823, being then twelve years of age, he was transferred to his uncle's care at Foyle College. Almost coeval with the settlement of Ulster, this school has sent forth, from its earliest times, a long succession of distinguished pupils; and, probably, no school of its size ever contained within its walls at the same time a greater number of boys who were destined to become famous than were to be found at Foyle College during the period of which I write. Among them were Sir George Lawrence, the lion-hearted and chivalrous prisoner of Afghan and Sikh; Sir Henry Lawrence, Sir John Lawrence, Sir Robert Montgomery! Strange indeed that the last three of these men should have lived to rule the Punjab in concert, and play, by universal consent, a foremost part in that struggle of heroes which saved our Indian Empire!

The sports of the boys at Foyle College partook of the spirit-stirring and heroic character of their surroundings. There were about a hundred boys in the school, the boarders being chiefly the sons of the clergy and gentry of the adjoining counties; the day scholars the sons of the citizens of Derry. The broad distinction often drawn by boys themselves between boarders and day scholars was emphasised at Foyle by a mimic warfare, carried on sometimes in the shape of single combats between champions representative of each party, sometimes between the collective forces of the whole.

It is illustrative of a savagery in schoolboy nature which has now nearly passed away, as well as of that mixture of national characteristics in John Lawrence to which I have already alluded, that, on first going to his English school at Clifton, he was nicknamed 'Paddy;' and received many kicks as being an Irishman; while, on being transferred to his Irish school at Foyle, he was nicknamed 'English John,' and received many, probably a good many more, kicks, as being an Englishman.

What the character of the education at Foyle College was like we are left to judge by the results, and by casual remarks in after life of the two brothers. That it was not a first-rate

education is probable enough. 'For my part,' says Sir Henry Lawrence, 'my education consisted in kicks; I was never taught anything.' But boys are often apt, in perfect good faith, to attribute to their school what is due, in part at least, to their own shortcomings. John Lawrence, in the fragment of autobiography already quoted, probably states the case with greater fairness thus: 'At school and at college I did not work regularly and continuously, and did not avail myself of the opportunities which offered for securing a good education. But I worked by fits and starts. . . . When I went to college (Haileybury) I was a fair Latin and mathematical scholar, and a poor Greek one: but I had read a great deal in a desultory fashion, particularly of history and biography, and was generally, for my age, well-informed.'

The religious training was more persistent than judicious. A kind-hearted sister of the head master used to take this part of the education under her special charge, and would send for the boys, one by one, from their play, every two or three days, that she might read and pray with them. The Lawrences, being nephews as well as pupils, got a double share of these attentions, and Sir Robert Montgomery well remembers how they used to slink by their aunt's room on tiptoe in hopes of escaping. It was a hope often disappointed; for the door would open on a sudden and the vigilant aunt carry them off in triumph to her lecture.

If the seeds of John Lawrence's deep religious convictions were sown now, it is certain that they long lay dormant, and it is probable that it was to a reaction from the forcing system of Foyle College that was due the most striking characteristic of his religious belief—its reserve and its unobtrusiveness. He seldom talked of religion, hardly ever said a word that was distinctly religious even to his intimate friends and relations. Yet everybody knew it was there. Levity and irreligion stood abashed in his presence. His religion seemed to be too sacred and too simple to admit of handling in common talk. It was a plant with roots so deep and so tender that he would not allow himself, still less any one else, to pluck it up to see how it was growing.

In 1825 John Lawrence left Foyle, and went to finish the first part of his education at Wraxall Hall, a large rambling

Elizabethan house in North Wiltshire, about six miles from Bath, which, with its inner court, its orchard, and several large gardens attached to it, gave ample room for the amusement of its inmates. And from a conversation which I have had with one of his few surviving contemporaries—Mr. Wellington Cooper of Lincoln's Inn—I recall the following :—

John Lawrence was tall and overgrown ; I was much struck by the angular formation of his face. He was rough but kindly ; hot-tempered but good-natured withal. We had a rough enough life of it at school ; our bedrooms were so cold that the water used to freeze hard in the basins, and the doctor used to remark that it was no wonder that we were all in such good health, for every room had a draught in it. This was true enough. The window-frames of our bedroom were of stone, and an iron bar across the centre was supposed to prevent ingress or egress. Lawrence managed to loosen it so that it could be taken out and replaced without attracting observation, and when the nights were hot he would creep through it in his nightshirt and, reaching the ground by the help of a pear-tree which grew against the wall, would go and bathe in the neighbouring stream. We were fast friends, and in the kindness of his heart he would have done anything for me. I was very fond of bird-nesting. A swallow had built its nest at the top of our chimney, and I expressed a wish to get at it. 'I'll get the eggs for you,' said John, and went straight to the chimney, and began to climb up it inside. It soon became too narrow for his burly frame. 'Never mind, I'll get them yet,' he said, and at once went to the window. I and my brother followed him through it, and, climbing a wall twelve feet high, which came out from one end of the house and formed one side of the court, pushed him up from its summit as far as we could reach towards the roof. He was in his nightshirt, with bare feet and legs ; but, availing himself of any coign of vantage that he could find, he actually managed to climb up the wall of the house by himself. When he reached the roof, he crawled up the coping stones at the side on his knees, and then began to make his way along the ridge towards the chimney ; but the pain by this time became too great for human endurance : 'Hang it all,' he cried, 'I can't go on !' and he had to give it up. The kindness of heart which I remember in John Lawrence at school was vividly recalled to me by an anecdote I heard of him in much later life. A governess who was taking charge of his nieces at Southgate heard that her sister, who was in poor circumstances, was ill in Paris with no one to look after her. Sir John at once wrote to the chaplain at the English Embassy to ask him to find her out, to transfer her to more comfortable quarters, and see that she had the best medical aid, at his expense.

In 1827 came the turning point of John Lawrence's life. John Hudleston, an old friend of the family who had risen to high office in the Madras Presidency, had, on his return

to England, become a director of the East India Company and a Member of Parliament ; and the influence and patronage which he thus acquired he used with a single eye for the benefit of those among whom the best years of his life had been passed. For two services in particular his name deserves to be gratefully remembered amongst them. It may, perhaps, be questioned which was the greater of the two. By his exertions in Parliament and elsewhere he did much to prepare the way for the abolition of suttee by Lord William Bentinck, and he sent the Lawrences to India.

The three elder brothers, Alexander, George, and Henry, had already received from him appointments in the Indian army, and had gone off to India, the two former in the cavalry, the latter, for 'fear lest it should be said that no Lawrence could pass for the artillery,' in the more scientific branch of the service. It was now John's turn. But, to his surprise and disgust, the appointment offered to him was an appointment not in the army, but in the Indian Civil Service. His father had been a soldier before him ; so were his three elder brothers. The stories of his father's campaigns to which he had listened, the books of travel and of history which he had read, the associations of his Londonderry school—all had combined to fill his mind with military aspirations, and now he would go to India as a soldier, or not go at all. In vain did his father point to his scars and talk of his hard service and his scanty pension. In vain did Henry Lawrence, who had just returned from India invalided from the first Burmese war, and disgusted, like most young officers of his energy and capacity, with the incapacity and the red-tapeism which seemed to block the way, appeal to arguments which were likely to be of more weight in his brother's eyes—the greater field for ability, for vigour, and for usefulness which the Civil Service afforded. John Lawrence stood firm ; and, had there not been an influence at home more powerful than that of either his father or brother, it is likely that he would have stuck to his determination to the end, and India, when the time came, if she had gained a great general, would have lost a still greater ruler.

How the matter ended I am able to relate in the words of an eye-witness, one of the earliest and latest friends of the

Lawrences, who happened to be staying at Clifton when the knotty question had to be decided. The testimony which she gives incidentally to that paramount influence which, now and through all John Lawrence's life, moulded and stimulated him, will be observed.

John Lawrence's eldest sister (says Mrs. B——) was an extraordinary woman : strong of mind and of will, quick in apprehension, yet sound and sober in judgment, refined and cultured, with a passionate enthusiasm for all that was 'pure and lovely, and of good report.' In a word, hers was a nature possessed by the highest qualities of her soldier brothers, in combination with feminine gentleness and goodness. She had enjoyed varied advantages in the society in which her lot was occasionally cast. At the house of Mr. Hudlestone, among other distinguished men, she had often met Wilberforce and the Thorntons, and had quietly drunk in their wit and conversation from the sofa to which, as an invalid, she was long confined. Perhaps her brother Henry, who more nearly resembled her in character and disposition, was most amenable to her influence ; but John, too, though the greater independence of character manifested in his after life was early developed, cherished what might be called, without exaggeration, a boundless reverence for all she said and thought. In the present stern conflict between duty and inclination the family 'oracle' was lovingly resorted to. The scene in Letitia's room can never be forgotten by those who witnessed it. It may have been the crisis in John's life. He was seated at the foot of the invalid's couch in earnest debate about the perplexing gift. With all the vehemence of his ardent boy nature, as if to leave no doubt as to his own decided prepossessions, and, perhaps, with a bold effort to win the assent which he felt to be indispensable, he exclaimed, 'A soldier I was born, and a soldier I will be !' The prudent counsellor, however, advised differently. She urged him without hesitation to accept the boon, as affording in every way advantages unknown to the military life. Other influences no doubt conspired with hers to induce him to make what was, to his own personal feelings and aspirations, a great self-sacrifice, but it was to Letitia's calm advice and good judgment that he reluctantly but bravely yielded. She may be said, indeed, to have turned the scales, and thus in a measure determined an illustrious future.

Dean Merivale, the distinguished author of the 'History of the Romans under the Empire,' is said to boast that he, in truth, saved India, though he never saw it ! He may well do so ; for he was offered and declined the nomination to Haileybury, which, on his refusal, fell to John Lawrence. To Haileybury, accordingly, John Lawrence went, while Ashley, his Wraxall friend, had to go to Addiscombe without him. The East India College at Haileybury, whatever

may have been its shortcomings, did a noble work in its day, and one for which, as it appears to me, no adequate substitute has yet been found. It gave an *esprit de corps* and a unity of purpose; it laid the foundations of lasting friendships, and stimulated a generous ambition among those who were about to be engaged in one of the grandest tasks which has fallen to the youth of any country or any age. It was then in good hands. Dr. Joseph Hallet Batten, Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge, and an excellent classical scholar, as well as a high wrangler, was the Principal, and with him worked an able staff of professors. Among them were the Rev. C. W. Le Bas, who was dean and professor of mathematics; the Rev. Henry Walter, who had been second wrangler, professor of natural history and chemistry, one of the cleverest and most genial of men; W. Empson, who had lately succeeded Sir James Mackintosh in the professorship of law, and was afterwards to become son-in-law to Francis Jeffrey, and editor of the 'Edinburgh Review,' and the Rev. T. R. Malthus, the celebrated political economist, who was professor of that science and also of history. Among the Oriental staff, to whom the students were indebted for such knowledge of Arabic, Sanscrit, Persian, Hindustani, Bengali, Telegu, as they could pick up in the scanty time afforded for the learning of those languages, should be specially mentioned Mirza Ibrahim, an accomplished scholar, and, in every point of view, a remarkable man.

John's elder brother, Henry, accompanied him with parental care on his first visit to the College, on July 22, 1827, and, anxious and energetic as usual, walked up and down the library with him, busily explaining some rather recondite matters which he thought might be useful in the impending examination. But John was less eager to receive than Henry to impart information, and an anxious parent, observing what was passing, begged Henry to transfer his attentions to his son. Henry complied. The questions which he discussed were duly asked in the papers which followed, and to the help thus given his grateful pupil attributed his success in the examination. John, on his part, took a respectable place, but nothing more.

At that time, the demand in India for young civilians was so great that the usual period of residence at Haileybury—

four terms, or two years—was reduced by half, or even more, provided the candidate was eighteen years of age, and was able to pass the necessary examinations 'with distinction.' This latter condition John was able to fulfil at the end of his first year; but, being only seventeen, he was compelled to remain at Haileybury a second year, and to see some twenty of his contemporaries pass out before him. During these two years he was 'neither very idle nor very industrious.' He managed to gain some prizes and medals, but not in such numbers as to attract the attention of those about him, or in any way to indicate his brilliant future. In his second term, he carried off the prize for history and another for his knowledge of Bengali. In his third term, he won another prize for Bengali, and was second in political economy. In his fourth and last term, he gained a third prize for Bengali—a language of which the future Punjabi was not destined to make much use—and the gold medal for law. The highest immediate aim of an industrious and ambitious Haileybury student was to pass out the first of his term to his own Presidency, a distinction gained by Charles Trevelyan about two years before. John Lawrence passed out third for Bengal, a position with which his friends and he himself were well satisfied.

The pressure put upon those who were not disposed to work on their own account was never great. Lectures were over at one P.M. and the rest of the day was pretty much at the disposal of the students. The college was situated in the midst of an open heath where fine air was to be had for the asking. It was a country where it 'seemed always afternoon'—'a place,' says Sir Charles Trevelyan, 'eminently suited for roaming and sauntering,' an occupation which seems to have fallen in with John Lawrence's tastes, but was often varied by visits, which were neither allowed nor forbidden, to the three neighbouring towns of Hertford, Ware, and Hoddesdon, which lay at an equal and easy distance from the college. Of John Lawrence's general characteristics and mode of life under such circumstances I am able to give a good notion in the words of his friend J. H. Batten.

John Lawrence was, in appearance, rugged and uncouth, but his tall

gaunt figure was sufficiently set off by an intelligent face and by his high good humour. He did not much affect general society; and though, like others, he sometimes 'rode in the dilly' to Ware or Hertford, he, on the whole, preferred mooning about the quadrangle and the reading-room, or wandering over the wild neighbouring heath, not uncommonly varying the game of fives at the college racquet-court by one of skittles or bowls or quoits behind the 'College Arms;' and the bad beer procured at this and neighbouring hostels was often recalled, not without regret, in after life by the exiles of Bengal, Madras, and Bombay. Lawrence, at that time, displayed a good deal of the Irish element, and he with his intimate friend Charles Todd—who died after a short career in India—first initiated me into the mysteries sacred to St. Patrick's Day, Hallowe'en, the glorious, pious, and immortal memory of King William, the 'prentice-boys of Derry, &c. By a stupid and inexcusable failure in Bengali, I managed to come out only sixth in my last term, while Lawrence was third. But it was a failure which enables me to record a characteristic anecdote. On that great final day of our Collegiate career, the 28th of May, 1829, my father, the Principal, was in high good humour, for, in spite of the disaster just described, I had delivered before a rather brilliant audience in the hall a prize essay on 'The Power of the Romans in the West compared with the British in the East;' and going up with pretended anger to John Lawrence, he said good humouredly, 'Oh, you rascal, you have got out ahead of my son;' to which, with ready wit, Lawrence replied, 'Ah, Dr. Batten, you see it's all *conduct*; I fear Hallet has not been quite so steady as I;' thus turning the tables on the Principal, who, to Lawrence's knowledge, had more than once remonstrated on my 'loafing about with that tall Irishman.'

This brings me to another anecdote. When I was at home, on furlough, during what turned out to be the Mutiny year (1857), I went to Brighton to pay my respects to Mr. Le Bas, who had, long since, retired from the Haileybury Principalship, in which he succeeded my father. Those who knew the man, with his sharp peculiar voice, and his hand to his ear, can easily imagine the scene. He called out to me, 'Hallet, who is this John Lawrence of whom I hear so much?' to which I replied, 'Don't you remember a tall, thin Irishman with whom I much consorted, who once kept an Irish revel of bonfires on the grass plot opposite to Letter C; and whom you forgave on account of his Orange zeal and his fun?' 'Aha!' said the old dean, 'I remember the man; not a bad sort of fellow;' and then he burst into one of his fits of laughter, ending with the dry remark, 'But what has become of all our *good* students?'

It may be added that the excellent public school which has now taken the place of the old India College at Haileybury has done honour to itself by letting into the wall of the room C 54, which he formerly occupied, a brass plate with the words, 'John Lawrence, 1829,' engraved upon it; while, among the dormitories which have received the names of



Haileybury students who afterwards distinguished themselves in India, such as Trevelyan, Edmonstone, Thomason, Bartle Frere, and Colvin, or of distinguished Principals of the old college, such as Batten, Le Bas, Melvill, there is none which bears so illustrious a name—a name known, as Macaulay would say, to every schoolboy—as that which is called after the Chief Commissioner of the Punjab and the Governor-General of India—‘John Lawrence.’

## CHAPTER II.

LIFE AT DELHI. 1829-1834.

WE have now followed, with the help of such scanty records as are, at this distance of time, recoverable, the career of John Lawrence during the first eighteen years of his life. They are in no way especially remarkable. He has passed through three schools and the East India College at Haileybury without their leaving any very distinctive mark on him, or he on them. He has been crossed in the darling wish of his heart, to follow the profession of his father and three elder brothers. The one relative whom we have seen to possess an extraordinary influence over him has used it to shape—possibly, as it may have seemed to him to thwart—his destinies, and he leaves her behind him on the couch of an invalid. Strong, rough, warm-hearted, self-reliant, full of exuberant merriment, half-disciplined, and little more than half-educated, with the Irish element in his character, at this period, distinctly overshadowing the Scotch, he leaves his father's home hardly expecting to see him again, for a profession which he would never have sought, and for which he deems he has no special aptitude. Scores, nay, hundreds, of young civilians must have started for India with lighter hearts and with hopes apparently better founded than his.

With him there went out his elder brother, Henry, who had already seen five years of India and Indian campaigning and had been driven back to England before his time, fever-stricken and 'so reduced,' as an entry in his mother's diary puts it, 'by sickness and suffering, that he looked more than double his age.' John Hudlestone, the kind friend who had given the elder brothers, one after the other, their appointments in India, had indeed consoled Henry's broken-hearted

sister when he first left the parental home, by saying to her, 'All your brothers will, I think, do well, but Henry has so much steadiness and resolution that you will see him come back a general. He will be "Sir Henry Lawrence" before he dies.' But no kind friend, so far as I can discover, ventured on a like prediction with respect to John. That he would be 'Sir John Lawrence' before he died would have seemed unlikely enough to the most sanguine of his friends, or the most appreciative of his Haileybury tutors. But that he would be a chief instrument in the saving of India, that he would be Governor-General, that he would die 'Lord Lawrence of the Punjab,' would have seemed as absurd and as incredible as the prediction in the nursery story to young Dick Whittington, that he would, one day, become Lord Mayor, nay, thrice Lord Mayor, of London.

John Lawrence passed out of Haileybury in May 1829, but he lingered on some four months longer in England, that he might have the 'benefit of his brother Henry's society on his voyage out.' 'Henry's presence in England,' he says himself, 'during the time I was at Haileybury, had been of considerable advantage to me. He went down to the first examination with me, and stimulated me to exertion while I was there.' It seems strange in these days of whirlwind locomotion when a man is thankful to be allowed to leave his post in India, on short furlough, and, after spending a month with his friends at home, is back at his work again before his three months are up, to find that John Lawrence spent four months in England merely that he might have the benefit of his brother's company during the voyage.' But there were no steamers in those days. Worse still, there was no Overland Route, and the voyage to India round the Cape was sometimes a matter, as the brothers were to find to their cost, of five months and more.

They sailed from Portsmouth on September 2, 1829, accompanied by Honoria, the sister who came between them in point of age. John suffered terribly, as he always did in later life, from sea-sickness. It was six weeks before he could leave his berth. At one time, as he often used to tell, his life was all but despaired of; and a terrible hurricane off the south of Africa showed that the 'Cape of Storms' was still true to its character. But in the intervals of com-

parative comfort the two brothers studied hard at the native languages, for which neither had a turn, but which each knew to be indispensable for a life of usefulness in India. They did not reach Calcutta till February 9, 1830, and here they separated, Henry, to join his company of Foot Artillery at Kurnal, a large military station to the north of Delhi, on what was then our north-west frontier; John, to complete in the College of Fort William such study of the native languages as was necessary before he could enter on his civil duties.

During the whole time that John Lawrence was in the College of Fort William he was more or less ill. The climate did not agree with him. He took little care of himself, and he was so much depressed in spirits that he thought seriously of returning to England. He has often been heard to say since that an offer of £100 a year in England in those dark days would have taken him straight home. The society of the capital, with the brilliant carriages on its Mall, its morning and evening canters over the Maidan, its balls and its dinner-parties, so acceptable to most young civilians, seems to have had no charms for him; and perhaps the rough, downright young Irishman, who then, as ever afterwards, cared nothing for appearances, would have made little way with the society of the capital.

At last he managed to pass the necessary examinations in Urdu and Persian, of which latter language he remained ever afterwards a colloquial master; and then, instead of applying for a post in one of the more settled and peaceful provinces of Lower Bengal, where the work would, comparatively speaking, be one of routine, he was, at his own request, gazetted for Delhi.

A breathing space of some months was usually allowed to young civilians, after passing their examination, before they were expected to be at their post. But John Lawrence was off to his at once. The method of travelling usual in those days was the comparatively easy one of 'trek' up the Ganges. But John preferred the more rapid mode of palanquin dawk, and managed to accomplish the distance of nine hundred miles in eighteen days. The motives which induced him to select the Delhi district as his first field of action are not far to seek. It was not that the work

would be easy and straightforward, or the inhabitants tractable and submissive. On the contrary, the work was as arduous and exacting, and the inhabitants as turbulent and warlike, as could have been found within the Company's dominions. But, for this very reason, it was likely to afford the best preparation for whatever might come afterwards.

The town and district of Delhi had been placed, ever since the time of its conquest from the Mahrattas by Lord Lake, under the control of a British officer, who bore the title of 'Resident and Chief Commissioner.' The post was one which demanded and developed high qualities, and its varied duties were indicated by the unusual title borne by its occupant. It had twice been filled by Charles Metcalfe, who, fortified by the experience thence derived, was now rising, as John Lawrence was himself to rise from it, in later days, by rapid strides towards much higher dignities, and was not to die till he had been, in rapid succession, supreme governor of India itself, of Jamaica, and of Canada.

The post of Resident of Delhi was, at that time, held by Thomas Theophilus Metcalfe, a younger brother of Sir Charles. The work was, partly, what is called in India 'political,' partly administrative. The 'political' duties of the Resident brought him, primarily, into contact with the Mogul and his palace, but they also made his influence felt over the vast range of country which lies between Malwa on the south-east and the Punjab on the north-west. They thus embraced those numerous states, the appanages of the oldest and proudest and most powerful Rajpoot chiefs, which, together with intervening tracts of desert, make up the district called by a geographical fiction, as if it were a united whole, Rajpootana. They included also the 'protected Sikh states' of Jheend, Puttiala, Khytul, and Nabha, which, with numerous smaller chieftainships, were interlaced in a perplexing manner with the British territory.

In his civil capacity as 'Commissioner' in the purely British territory, the Resident had to keep order, to administer justice, to superintend the apportionment and collection of the revenue, and to develop, as far as practicable, the resources of a very imperfectly developed country. His assistants, who were four or five in number, usually lived, like the members of one family, in the Residency house

or compound, and, after they had served their first apprenticeship, were liable to be employed in any of the various duties which belonged to the Resident himself. They thus managed, at a very early stage of their career, to combine the functions of magistrate, collector, and judge.

The Delhi district, happily for all concerned, was a non-regulation province. In spite of successive waves of foreign conquest which had swept over it, the native institutions had been less changed here than in almost any other part of India. The venerable village communities remained intact, and the cue of the English officers was, happily not to destroy, but to preserve and make the best of them. That 'mystery of iniquity,' as it has been well called by Sir John Kaye, the law of sales for arrears of rent, had not been introduced into the Delhi territory, and justice was administered not so much by hard and fast regulations, as on principles of natural equity. It is thus not too much to say that every 'assistant' to the Resident, owing to the variety of his work, the liberty he was allowed, and the sense of responsibility which was thus developed, enjoyed almost unique facilities for showing what was in him.

Among the 'assistants' in 1831 was Charles Trevelyan, who by his energy, his ability, and his fearlessness, had already in his subordinate capacity, made a great name. Amidst all but universal obloquy, he had struck boldly at corruption in high places, and at last, amidst all but universal appreciation, he had levelled it with the ground, never again, it is to be hoped, to rear its head. He found a kindred spirit in the newly arrived John Lawrence, whom he had himself been instrumental in attracting thither; and thus began a friendship which lasted without intermission for nearly fifty years, till death ended or put the seal to it. The two friends did not remain long together now, for Trevelyan was called off, in the following year, to Bhurtpore, while John Lawrence remained behind in the city with which so much of his career was to be bound up.

The impression, however, made by the younger man, who had not yet done a stroke of professional work in India, upon the elder, was distinct enough, and has, after the lapse of some fifty years, in conversation with myself, been thus vividly recalled: 'When I first saw John Lawrence he was,

in appearance, singularly like what he was in advanced life; nay, he looked, in a manner, older than in after life: the lines in his face were even deeper. He had a hungry, anxious look. He seemed to be of a mercurial disposition. I do not mean that he had instability or the faults of the Irish character, but he was earnest and restless. For example, he was very fond of riding, and he always appeared to be riding at a hand gallop. Here was the foundation for a man of action. I did not seek for or detect any signs of what ordinarily called "superiority" or greatness then, but, looking back now, I can see that what I did notice was capable of a much higher interpretation than I put upon it.'

John Lawrence's first appointment under the Resident was that of 'assistant judge, magistrate, and collector' of the city and its environs—over an area, that is, of some 800 square miles, and a population of about 500,000 souls. Of this total the city itself contained some 200,000, and with their narrow round of interests and occupations, and their petty crimes and quarrels, the work of the assistant magistrate would be principally concerned. The city population consisted of many different elements. The capital of Mohammedan India of course contained a large number of Indian Mohammedans, but the larger portion was composed of Hindus, with an admixture of Sikhs and Afghans.

John Lawrence remained at Delhi for nearly four years, 'working regularly and steadily without any change or intermission.' Once indeed he joined a hog-hunting expedition given by Trevelyan on an extensive scale in some large tamarisk jungles on the banks of the Jumna; and, once or twice, he paid hasty visits to his brother George, who was then entertaining, at his house at Kurnal, Henry Lawrence and the sister (Honoraria) who had come out to India with them. On March 6, 1831, Henry had written from Kurnal to his sister Letitia at home, 'You may imagine how glad we are that John has got himself appointed to Delhi. He is now within a few hours of us and in very good hands; on my return to Kurnal at the end of the month he will come over.' And it is pleasant to read in a letter written to me, and dated 'February 18, 1888, Brighton,' from Honoraria (now Mrs. Barton), the sister concerned, how these anticipations of the family were fulfilled: 'During the fifteen months that we

lived with our brother George at Kurnal, John occasionally visited us, and made us very happy. He seemed quite satisfied with his position at Delhi, and liked his work, and we knew that he had warm friends in the Commissioner and his family.' It may be mentioned that, much as he liked the Commissioner, he did not, like the other 'assistants,' live in the Residency compound, but in a separate house, a mile and a-half off with a chaplain of the name of Everest, with whom he had struck up a friendship. Nor is it without interest to remark that among the young Englishmen then to be found at Delhi was Robert Napier, who, at that very time, was engaged, at the head of a body of sappers, in strengthening the fortifications which, twenty-seven years later, were so long to bid defiance to the forces which John Lawrence was to keep hurrying thither from his distant province.



## CHAPTER III.

### LIFE AND ADVENTURES AT PANIPUT. 1834-1837.

At the end of his four years' apprenticeship in the city of Delhi, John Lawrence was transferred to a 'district' and placed in charge of the northern division of the Delhi territory. Its chief station was Paniput, at a distance of some twenty miles from which here lay the important military cantonment of Kurnal. But the Paniput district needed no cantonment to keep alive the martial spirit, or to awake the military associations, which are inseparably connected with its history: for what the plain of Esdraelon has been to Jewish, and the carse of Stirling to Scottish, history; what Belgium has, in later times, been to the history of the whole of Europe;—so the Paniput district is to the history of the Indian peninsula. It is, in short, the battlefield of India.

Not to speak of less important combats and campaigns innumerable, three times over the fate of the whole peninsula has been decided within its boundaries. It was here, in 1556, that Akbar, the greatest of the Moguls—then a stripling of thirteen years old—after performing, according to the story, prodigies of personal valour, which we may believe or not, succeeded, as we must believe, under the guidance of the able general, Behram Khan, who nominally served under him, in winning back for his father, Humayun, the empire which he had lost. It was here, in 1739, that Nadir Shah, the greatest warrior whom modern Persia has produced, after raising himself to the Persian throne, and beating back the Turks and Russians to the west and north, and taking Herat and Candahar, Ghuzni and Cabul, to the

east and south, shattered the forces of the Mogul, Mohammed Shah, and carried off the spoils of Delhi as his prize. And it was here, once more, in 1761 that Ahmed Shah Dourani, after repeatedly invading India through the Khyber Pass, finally defeated the Mahratta hosts, and, after incredible slaughter, drove their remnant headlong southward over the Nerbudda, deprived, for the time, of all their northern conquests. Had it not been for this crowning victory, the Mahrattas must have overrun and conquered all Upper India thirty years and more before the Wellesleys came to stop them.

Influenced, it may be, by these historical traditions, the people of the Paniput district bore a character for turbulence and disaffection beyond that of any of the adjoining districts; and if the city of Delhi had given John Lawrence an insight, which he could hardly have obtained elsewhere, into the condition of all classes of a city population, as well as of the older aristocracy, it is equally certain that few districts could have given him so thorough an acquaintance with the wants and habits of the best part of the inhabitants of India, its agricultural population, and—what is more material to note here—with, perhaps, the very best section of that best part, the widely-spread race of Jats.

As far south as Kurnal, all the Jats adopted the name and creed of Sikhs; but those beyond are still Hindus in creed and retain their original name. The Sikh religion was, at first, merely a reformed Hinduism. But in process of time it became much more, and may be described rather as 'the military and political spirit superadded to a reformed religion.' The Sikhs are equally well known as excellent and thrifty cultivators of the soil and as hardy and formidable soldiers. Their feelings, social and political, are highly democratic; and though they rally round the leaders of their race, it is in the free spirit of associates rather than of servants. Those Jats who have not adopted the new religion are quite as fearless and industrious, but they are more peacefully inclined, than their Sikh brethren. They know how to defend their rights, should any one be venturesome enough to attack them, with the most effectual of arguments; and the only real obstacle to our conquests in the north of India in the beginning of this century came from them. It was

the great Jat chiefship of Bhurtpore, for instance, which rolled back for a time the victorious career of Lord Lake.

Such, then, was the race—thrifty, industrious, independent, stoutly attached to their village communities and their ancestral acres—with which John Lawrence had now to deal in his new appointment as collector-magistrate of the Paniput district. How did he deal with them?

Let us hear what Charles Raikes, the author of one of the best books on this and kindred subjects,\* and, like Charles Trevelyan, another lifelong friend of John Lawrence, writes, from his personal recollection, about the duties which the Paniput district required, and of the way in which John Lawrence discharged them.

Early in the year 1835 John Lawrence was stationed at the ancient and historically famous town of Paniput. He was 'officiating' as magistrate and collector of the district. He had also to conduct a settlement and survey of the lands comprised in his district. Let us glance for a moment at the details of the sort of work and duty confided to this young Irishman. Paniput is situated on the high road from Delhi to the Punjab, about seventy miles north-west of Delhi. The district is inhabited by Jats, industrious Hindu peasants, devoted to agriculture, and attached by the strongest ties to the land; by Goojurs, who were given to cattle-lifting; and by Ranghurs (Rajpoots converted to a nominal form of Mohammedanism), who were as jealous of their land as the Jats, still worse thieves than the Goojurs, with a taste for promiscuous robbery and murder into the bargain. These men, it is to be remembered, are not at all like the typical 'meek Hindu,' but on the contrary are tall, strong, bold fellows, determined and ready to fight for every inch of their land and every head of their cattle. In those days they never went out to plough or to herd their buffaloes without sword, shield, and often a long matchlock over their shoulders.

Over some 400,000 of a population like this, scattered in large villages through an area of 800,000 acres, John Lawrence ruled supreme. He himself, in those days, had very much the cut of a Jat, being wiry, tall, muscular, rather dark in complexion, and without an ounce of superfluous fat or flesh. He usually wore a sort of compromise between English and Indian costume, had his arms ready at hand, and led a life as *primus inter pares*, rather than a foreigner or a despot, among the people. Yet a despot he was, as any man soon discovered who was bold enough or silly enough to question his legitimate authority—a despot, but full of kindly feelings, and devoted heart and soul to duty and hard work.

As magistrate, he had charge of the police—a handful of sowars, or troopers, mounted on country horses and armed with sword and pistol, and mostly retained at headquarters, and the ordinary constabulary

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\* *Notes on the North-West Provinces of India.*

force stationed at the various thanahs, or police-stations, dotted over the district. Each of these stations was under the charge of a thanadar, or chief of police, with a jemadar, or sergeant, a mohurrir, or scribe, and a dozen or so of police burkundazes (literally 'hurler of fire'), who, armed with sword or lance, formed the rank and file of the force. But these were supplemented by a nondescript but very useful village official, a choukedar, whose duty was that of a watchman or parish constable, and a reporter (to the thanadar) of all crimes, sudden deaths, or other noteworthy events which happened in his village. This was the framework of the district police, little changed from the system which had prevailed for centuries under the Emperors of Delhi. It was a system sufficiently efficacious to protect the public under a just and energetic magistrate, and an apt engine of oppression under a venal or, above all, under a careless and slothful official. Suffice it to say that John Lawrence at Paniput was the right man in the right place, and for the following reasons.

First, he was at all times and in all places, even in his bedroom, accessible to the people of his district. He loved his joke with the sturdy farmers, his chat with the city bankers, his argument with the native gentry, few and far between. When out with his dogs and gun he had no end of questions to ask every man he met. After a gallop across country, he would rest on a charpoy, or country bed, and hold an impromptu *levée* of all the village folk, from the headman to the barber. '*Jan Larens*,' said the people, '*sub jania*,' that is, knows everything. For this very reason, he was a powerful magistrate, and, I may here add, a brilliant and invaluable revenue officer.

Secondly, he was never above his work. I have an indistinct recollection of his arresting a murderer, on receiving intelligence of the crime, with his own hand. At all events, where the report of a murder, an affray with wounding, or a serious robbery came in, John Lawrence was at once in the saddle and off to the spot. With greater deliberation, but equal self-devotion, he proceeded to the spot to investigate important disputes about land, crops, water privileges, boundaries, and so forth. The Persian proverb, 'Disputes about land must be settled on the land'—'*Kuzea zumeen buh dir zumeen*'—was often on his tongue.

Thirdly, owing to this determination to go about for himself, and to hear what everybody had to say about everything, he shook off, nay, he utterly confounded, the tribe of flatterers, sycophants, and informers who, when they can get the opportunity, dog the steps of the Indian ruler. What chance had an informer with a man who was bent on seeing everything with his own eyes?

All this might have been said of Donald Macleod, of Robert Montgomery, and of other friends of Lawrence who became great Indian administrators. But John Lawrence had, in addition, a quality of hardness, not amounting to harshness, but not short of severity, which made the malefactor tremble at his name. He might or he might not be loved—this seemed to be his mind—but respected he would be at all events.

I have said enough to show that in the early days of his Indian career

John Lawrence was a most energetic and vigorous magistrate. To do any sort of justice to the training of those days which prepared him for future distinction, I must now turn to Lawrence as a revenue officer. The good old East India Company which he served, and which called the young men sent out to rule her provinces 'writers,' called the chiefs who gathered up her lacs of rupees and ruled her landed millions 'collectors.' John Lawrence then was a 'collector,' as well as a magistrate, and just then the collector's work was in a transition state, which entailed severe labour and tested every faculty. The great survey and settlement of the land was in progress; boundaries were to be marked, every village measured and mapped, and registers of the area, the soil, the cultivators, the rent, the land-tax, in short, of all the facts and figures affecting the land, were to be made.

How it happened that Lawrence was expected, single-handed, to accomplish so vast a work I cannot tell. All that I can say is that when I was sent to help him, I cannot remember that he had any one to share his burden except his native officials, who, in those days, had purely ministerial powers in the revenue departments. For seven or eight months he lived amongst the agricultural classes in his tent, and thus mastered the detail of revenue work.

I was younger than Lawrence, and had been only three or four years in India when I went to join him at Paniput. For very good reasons I shall never forget my first interview with my chief. He was, I was going to say, in his shirt sleeves, only I am not sure that he wore a shirt in those days—I think he had a *chupkun*, or native undergarment—surrounded by what seemed to me a mob of natives, with two or three dogs at his feet, talking, writing, dictating—in short, doing *cutcherry*.

After some talk with me he summed up thus: 'Now look at this map. Paniput district is divided into nine thanahs (police circuits): I give you these three at the north-western extremity, including the large cantonment of Kurnal. I put the police and revenue work under you. Mind, you are not to get into rows with the military authorities. If you behave well to them they will be civil to you. If you can keep crime down and collect your revenue in your share of the district, I will not interfere with you. If you want help, come to me. All reports of your own thanahs will be sent to you. I shall soon know what you are made of. Go, and do not be hard on the zemindars (landowners). Government revenue, of course, must be paid, but do not be hard: "The calf gets the milk which is left in the cow." Come and see me sometimes.'

Lawrence thus trusted me and taught me to trust myself. From that hour my fortune as a public officer was made. I learned my work under the ablest of masters, and shall ever gratefully remember the day which saw me installed as assistant to the young magistrate and collector of Paniput.

John Lawrence remained in charge of the district which has been thus vigorously described for nearly two years (1835-37), and, during the greater part of that time, he was

the sole British officer in charge of the administration. The district was in bad order when he came into it, for his predecessor had not been very competent. Part of it, moreover, had suffered from the drought of 1833 and 1834. 'To bring people,' says John Lawrence, 'who were impoverished and discontented into order and contentment; to make them pay their land-tax punctually; to deter, if not to wean, them from their habits of life, which were those of their ancestors for centuries; to revise the assessment of the land-tax, which had broken down, and, at the same time, to carry on and improve the general administration, was no light task.'

In his predecessor's time, the revenue had often been collected almost in the Sikh fashion, at the point of the sword. Soldiers and guns had been the ordinary accompaniments of the revenue-collector. This John Lawrence did not like, and he determined to get on without them. There was one walled village, in particular, which was notorious for its recusancy. John Lawrence surrounded it by night with his own police, and, stationing a small knot of them on each track which led to the pastures, gave them strict orders to turn back into the village all the cattle as they came out in the early morning. The police did as they were told, and the village cowherds took back word that the orders of the Sahib were that no cattle were to be allowed to go to pasture till the land-tax was paid. Another and another sortie was attempted by the cowherds, but always with the same result. Meanwhile the cattle were becoming more hungry and more obstreperous, and, at last, a deputation of the villagers came out and asked for an interview with the Sahib. It was granted; but he soon found that they had come armed only with the usual *non possumus*; they had no money and could not pay. 'Well,' said the Sahib, 'I will let you go to the next village to borrow it, and if you bring back either the sum you owe or a bond from the banker to pay it for you within a certain day, well and good. Otherwise the cattle stay where they are.' The deputation saw that the Sahib was in earnest, and soon returned with the money. The cattle were able, by two or three o'clock in the afternoon, to pass out to their long-delayed morning meal, and there was no more trouble in the collection of the revenue in that

part of the district ; no need of guns, or soldiers, or even police.

The post of collector-magistrate of Paniput, which had hitherto been only an 'acting' one, now became permanently vacant, and John Lawrence, who had not been thought too young to reduce anarchy to order on a minimum of pay, was thought, as it seems, too young, now that it had been so reduced, to keep things going and to receive the proper salary. And, to make the disappointment more complete, he was superseded by a civilian who, having failed as a judge and having been deprived of the less onerous appointment, was now given the far more difficult post of collector and magistrate of Paniput ! It was red tape with a vengeance ; but if it first gave John Lawrence the hatred of red tape which he certainly showed when he was in a position to burst through its bonds, it may be well for all concerned that the disappointment came upon him.

Turned out of Paniput, John Lawrence reverted to his 'substantive' post as assistant magistrate and collector of Delhi, and, many years afterwards, he thus summed up what, as he thought, he had seen and done and gained in these first five years of work in India :—

During my charge of the Paniput district, I completed my training as a civil officer. It was a hard one, it is true, but one which I had no cause ever to regret. It has facilitated all my subsequent labours, no matter how varied, how onerous. I had become well acquainted with the duties of an administrator both in a large city and in an important agricultural district. I had come in contact with all classes of the people, high and low. I had made acquaintance with most of the criminal classes, and understood their habits of life. I had seen all the different agricultural races of that part of India. I had learned to understand the peculiarities of the tenure of land, the circumstances of Indian agriculture, canal and well irrigation, as well as the habits, social customs, and leading characteristics of the people. During this period, I defined and marked off boundaries between village lands, which had been the cause of sanguinary feuds for generations ; I revised the revenue assessments of the land ; I superintended the collection of the revenue ; I had charge of the treasury ; I sought out and brought to justice a number of great criminals ; I managed the police, and, in fact, under the humble designation of magistrate and collector, was the pivot round which the whole administration of the district revolved. In the discharge of my multifarious duties I visited, in all cases of more than ordinary difficulty, the very locality itself. For the most part, my only aids in all this work were the native col-

lectors of the different subdivisions of the country. In addition to all these duties, I did what I could to relieve the sick. In those days we had no dispensaries, and the civil duty of the medical officer was limited to the charge of the jail. I used to carry about a good-sized medicine-chest, and, when the day's work was over, was constantly surrounded by a crowd of people asking for relief for most of 'the ills to which flesh is heir.' Many a poor creature I had thus to send away, simply from fear of doing him harm.

Such was my daily life for nearly two years, and such were the lives of my brother civilians in adjacent districts. Half our time was spent in tents; and every portion of our charges would, at one time or the other, be duly visited, so that, in the event of any untoward accident, or serious crime, we could judge pretty correctly as to the peculiar circumstances connected with it. These were very happy days. Our time was fully occupied, and our work was of a nature to call forth all our energies, all our sympathies, and all our abilities. Our emoluments were relatively small, but the experience and the credit we gained stood us in good stead in after years. During this period I saw little of English society, finding that I could not enjoy it and also accomplish my work. Thus I seldom visited the cantonments except on urgent business, and then only, as a rule, for a single day. In those days I met with many curious adventures, and, on some occasions, was in considerable peril of life, but good fortune and careful management combined brought me successfully out of them all.

These last simple words are tantalising enough. They suggest but they do not satisfy. How suggestive and how unsatisfying I have the best of reasons for knowing; for old friends of John Lawrence have told me, alike in writing and in conversation, that, when he first came home from India on furlough, he used to pour forth a continuous flow of stories of hair-breadth escapes from assassination, from drowning, from wild beasts; of great criminals hunted down; of cattle-liftings on a gigantic scale; of riots and raids; of robberies and murders; of thugs and dacoits; of feats of his favourite dogs or horses,—all drawn directly from his own experience. And again, many years afterwards, when he had retired, as he thought, from public life, and when a family of children was growing up around him at Southgate, or at Brocket Hall, it was their ordinary Sunday evening's treat to hear one of these wonder-stirring adventures. 'What shall it be?' he always used to begin by asking—'a hunt, a robbery, or a murder?' The children, with that appetite for the awe-inspiring which is one of the most pleasurable pains of childhood, and one of the



most loved regrets of a later and a sadder age, generally first chose the murder. But their father had an abundant store of each kind from which to draw.

No Samson, no Hercules, no Milo, no Arthur, can have had more stories of personal prowess, of grim humour, of the relief of the distressed, to tell than he. Physically, he was a Hercules himself, as the noble busts of him by Mr. Woolner, and the remarkable portrait by Mr. Watts, which, it is to be hoped, will, some day, become the property of the nation, may still show to those who have never had the opportunity of seeing the man himself. Physical strength, commanding height, activity of body, elements of power as they are everywhere, are nowhere more potent than among the natives of India, whether among the enervated Bengalis, who can at least admire in others what they do not possess themselves, or among the wiry Sikhs and relentless Afghans, who can hardly fail to appreciate that of which they themselves possess so large a share. And when these physical characteristics are combined with others, moral and intellectual, which are conspicuously wanting in many Indian races—with absolute truthfulness in word and deed, with active benevolence, with a sagacity which is the result not of mere shrewdness, but of untiring honesty of purpose, with boundless devotion to duty and hard work—their possessor becomes a power indeed in the land.

On board the ship on which John Lawrence first went out to India, he used, even when weakened by sea-sickness, to astonish the passengers by the ease with which he could hold out at arm's length a cannon-ball which few of them could lift at all. Excitement sometimes lent him almost a preternatural degree of strength. One night, an Indian village was in flames; all efforts to extinguish it were useless, and an old woman, finding that neither she nor her belongings had the strength to carry out a sack of corn, almost all the worldly goods she possessed, from her cottage, sat down upon it, determined, like the Roman senators of old, to perish with her household gods. John Lawrence, who just then appeared upon the scene, in a sudden access of strength, like the Samson that he was, caught up the sack, and, like his prototype with the gates of Gaza, carried it to

a safe distance from the burning house. The old woman, finding that her sack of corn was saved, was no longer unwilling to save herself, and John Lawrence, going the next day to the spot, found that he was quite unable even to lift the sack from off the ground !

But these anecdotes indicate mere bodily strength. Here is one which implies something more.

Shortly after his appointment as Collector of Delhi, a lawless chief in an outlying and desert part of the country refused to pay his land-tax. Attended only by a single orderly—for he seldom took more—John Lawrence rode thither, a distance of some thirty miles, very early in the morning, to demand or to enforce payment. The village was walled, the gates were shut and barred, and not even his strength was able to force an entrance. What was he to do ? To go back would be a confession of defeat and would encourage other neighbouring chiefs to give similar trouble. On the other hand, it was the hottest season of the year. There was no food, no shelter, no shade outside the walls except that of a single sickly babul tree. Finally, there were no troops within thirty miles. He sent a hasty note by his orderly back to Delhi asking for some guns, and then sat down under the babul tree, exactly opposite the principal gate, a single man beleaguering or threatening a fortified post ! The fierce sun of India had done its worst, and was fast subsiding towards the horizon, but still no guns appeared, and still the resolute collector sat on. At last the chief of a neighbouring village approached and offered, should the Sahib so will, to help him to reduce his subjects to submission. John Lawrence, knowing that in India, as elsewhere, jealousy is a ruling motive among neighbouring potentates, accepted his offer for what it was worth. The result of a mere show of force, backed up by John Lawrence's stern resolution, was the submission of the recusant chieftain, the infliction of a fine over and above the land-tax, and the return of the collector in triumph to Delhi, after winning a bloodless victory, and without even the news, which has so often struck terror into the native breast, having reached the village, that the ' guns were coming.'

Years afterwards, when the Collector of Delhi had risen to be Chief-Commissioner of the Punjab, and had just suc-

ceeded in winning back Delhi from the mutineers, a list of rebel chiefs who had been sentenced to death was presented to him for his signature. The first name on the list attracted his attention, for it was that of the Goojur chieftain who had given him such timely aid twenty years before; and he struck his name off the list and spared his life.

Nor were John Lawrence's zeal and activity confined to his own district, vast as it was. He sometimes made work or sought it for himself outside the Paniput district, and with the best results. Here is an instance. It attracted much attention at the time from the high position held by the murdered man, and from the romantic circumstances which led to the detection of the murderer. John Lawrence was fond of telling the story, and more than one version of it has, I believe, appeared in print. From the last of these, which appeared in 'Blackwood's Magazine' for January 1878, and came then fresh from Lord Lawrence's lips, I gather and condense the following, adding one or two characteristic incidents which seem, in his old age, to have escaped his memory, but were certainly told by him as part of the story on other occasions.

On the morning of March 23, 1835, John Lawrence was just going to his bath at Paniput after many hours of work, when he received a brief note in Persian from one of his police, stating that news had come from Delhi that, on the preceding evening, as William Fraser, the Commissioner, was returning from a visit to a neighbouring Raja, a native trooper had ridden up to him and, firing his carbine into his 'sacred body,' had killed him on the spot.

William Fraser was a man of great force of character and deservedly popular among all classes, though his regard for the poor had often brought him in collision with members of the aristocracy. He was also a great friend of John Lawrence. Grieved at the loss of his friend, and thinking that his intimate acquaintance with every corner of Delhi might be of assistance in discovering the murderer, Lawrence instantly ordered his horse, and rode off to Delhi beneath the blazing sun, a distance of forty miles. There he learned from Thomas Metcalfe and from Simon Fraser, the two senior civil officers left in the station, that no clue to the murderer had yet been found, and that though some Goojurs

—a race famed for their skill as trackers—had succeeded in following the footprints of his horse from the scene of the murder for some distance in the direction of Delhi, they had failed to trace them beyond a point where several roads met.

This did not look promising. A casual remark which had been made by one, Futteh Khan, to Metcalfe, to the effect that he should not wonder if his nephew, the Nawab of Ferozepore, knew something about the murder, was reported to Lawrence. Metcalfe had dismissed it from his mind as suggested by motives of private animosity, but John Lawrence fastened upon it like a leech, and, soon discovering that the Nawab had had a quarrel with William Fraser about some land, he forthwith proceeded, with Simon Fraser, to a house in Delhi which belonged to that chieftain.

They found no one in the courtyard, nor did any voice from within answer to their repeated calls. Simon Fraser entered the house, and, during his absence, John Lawrence, sauntering up to a spot in the yard where a fine chestnut horse was tethered, began to examine his points, and soon noticed some nail-marks on a part of the hoof where they are not usually found. It flashed across him in an instant that it had been reported that Dick Turpin had sometimes reversed the shoes of his horse's hoofs to put his pursuers off the scent, and, at that same moment, one of the Goojurs, picking up a straw, measured carefully both the hind and fore hoofs. 'Sahib,' he cried, 'there is just one straw's difference in breadth between them, the very thing that we observed in the tracks on the road; this must be the animal ridden by the murderer.'

While this was being said and done, a trooper in undress lounged up and, in reply to a question or two, told John Lawrence that he was an orderly of the Nawab of Ferozepore, and that he had been sent by his master on a special mission to the city. 'This is a nice horse,' said Lawrence. 'Yes,' replied the man, 'he is a fine horse, but he is very weak and off his feed; he has been able to do no work for a week.' The appearance of the horse, so John Lawrence thought, gave the lie to this, and, espying at a little distance its saddle and other harness lying on the ground, he went up to it, and finding that the nosebag underneath the heap was full of corn, quietly slung it over the horse's head.

The 'sickly' animal began to eat greedily. Here was one link more, and, without saying anything to excite the trooper's suspicion, he induced him to accompany him to the cutcherry, where he ordered his immediate arrest.

Some fragments of note-paper, which Simon Fraser had meanwhile picked up in a bucket of water in the house, were now fitted together by the two men. The ink had been all but obliterated by the water, but some chemicals revived it, and revealed the words written in Persian, 'You know the object for which I sent you into Delhi; and I have repeatedly told you how very important it is for me that you should buy the dogs. If you have not done so, do it without delay.'

It hardly needed John Lawrence's penetration, with the threads which he already held in his hands, to discover that 'the dogs' were the Commissioner, whose life the trooper had been too long in taking, and, on his suggestion, a message was sent to the Nawab saying that his presence in Delhi was necessary, as a servant of his, Wassail Khan by name, was suspected of the murder of the Commissioner. The Nawab obeyed the summons, but, of course, he backed up the trooper in his denial, and disclaimed all knowledge of the murder.

Inquiries which were set on foot in the Nawab's territories, while he was detained at Delhi, soon showed that a second man on foot, whose name was Unyah Meo, was believed to have been present at the time of the murder. He was a freebooter, well known for his extraordinary strength and fleetness of foot. He had disappeared on that very night, and had not been seen since. Colonel Skinner, the well-known commandant of Skinner's Irregular Horse, was charged with the duty of searching for him. His whereabouts was soon discovered, communications opened with him, and promises of pardon made if he would give himself up and turn King's evidence against the murderer. Not long afterwards a man appeared by night and said, 'I am Unyah Meo, I will go with you.'

His story was soon told, and, simple truth as it was, it reads like a story from Herodotus about the ancient Persian court, or like a tale from the 'Arabian Nights,' rather than what it really was. He had been sent, as it appeared, by

the Nawab, with instructions to accompany the trooper on all occasions, and should the first shot fail to kill the Commissioner, who was not likely, with his well-known character, to die easily, he was to run in and despatch him with his sword. Wassail Khan's first shot had passed clean through the 'sacred body' of the Commissioner, so Unyah Meo's services were not required; but he hurried off at once to tell his master that the deed was done.

All that night and a good part of the next day he ran, and, towards the evening, arrived at the Nawab's fort at Ferozepore, ninety miles distant. He went straight to the door of the Nawab's room, and demanded immediate admittance, as he had news of importance to communicate. A thick curtain only shut off the presence-chamber from the ante-room, and, as the orderly entered. Unyah Meo, with the suspicion natural to one of his profession, lifted up very slightly a corner of the curtain and bent down, all eye, all ear, for what might follow. He heard the Nawab give orders that on his leaving the room he should on no account be allowed to leave the fort. Well knowing, now that the deed was done, that his death would be more serviceable to his master than his life, Unyah felt that this order was a sentence of death, and the moment he had told his story, and had been promised a large reward—for which he was to wait till the following morning—he slipped quietly down a back way, managed to leave the fort unobserved, and ran for his life to his cottage in the jungle, some seven miles away.

He was tired out by the ninety miles he had run already; but fear gave him fresh strength and speed, and he reached his home just in time for his wives—of whom he was blessed with a pair—to take him up to the flat roof of the house and conceal him under some bundles of straw. Soon the troopers whose pursuing feet he had seemed to hear close behind him, appeared upon the scene. But the wives, Rahab-like, kept the secret well, and Unyah, after a night's rest, escaped, like the spies, to the hills, and defied every effort to find him till he gave himself up of his own accord, in the manner I have already described, to the commander of Skinner's Horse.

Unyah's story was borne out by the accidental discovery

of the carbine which had been used by Wassail Khan, under circumstances which were quite in keeping with the other marvellous features of the case. A woman was drawing water from a well close to the Cabul gate of Delhi ; the rope broke, the bucket fell into the water, and the hook used to recover it brought up, not the bucket, but the missing carbine ! Other people deposed that they had seen the trooper return on the night of the murder with his horse—the horse which could neither work nor eat !—in a tremendous lather, as though from a long or rapid ride. The Nawab and his trooper still stoutly denied all knowledge of the crime, but they were tried by a special commissioner, found guilty, and hanged together before the Cashmere gate of the city.

It is a story which John Lawrence might well be fond of telling, and it is not without a strange and tragic interest to remark that Simon Fraser, the cousin, who had helped him in the search, was the very man who, twenty-two years later, when he, in his turn, was Commissioner of Delhi, was to fall one of the first victims to the fury of the mutineers, in the Mogul's palace, on May 11, 1857. It did not need a similar display of sagacity on John Lawrence's part to discover, on that occasion, who the murderers were ; for the deed and its accompaniments seemed to shake our Indian Empire to its base ; but it did need all his sagacity, all his courage, and all his other manly qualities to undo what they had done ; and how he was equal to the occasion will appear in the later portion of this biography.

## CHAPTER IV.

LIFE AND ADVENTURES AT GORGAON AND ETAWA.  
1837-1840.

THE disappointment which befell John Lawrence when in 1837 he was compelled to leave the Paniput district, the field of his hard work and his success, and to fall back on his subordinate position at Delhi, is one to which any civilian in India who takes an 'acting' appointment, as it is called, is liable. So few people are able to descend with anything like a good grace to lower work when they have already proved themselves capable, and more than capable, of higher, that it is not to be wondered at that there is a general feeling in India against taking such temporary appointments. This, however, was not John Lawrence's feeling; for when, in 1842, he was returning to India after his first furlough, the bit of practical advice which most impressed itself on the mind of a young civilian who was then going out for the first time, and with whom he had much talk, was to the following effect:—

Never let an acting appointment, if it should be offered to you, slip by. People will tell you that such appointments are to be avoided, and are more plague than profit. It is true that you may occasionally be disappointed, and you will certainly not gain continuous promotion in that line, but you will get what is more valuable, experience, and great variety of it; and this will fit you for whatever may come afterwards. I have never let an 'acting' appointment go by, and I am now very glad that I have not.

The sting of the descent to lower work did not last long; for, after three months spent in his old appointment at Delhi, John Lawrence was promoted to the grade of



'joint magistrate and deputy-collector of the southern division of the Delhi territory,' while he was also to be the 'acting' magistrate and collector of the city itself. After discharging this latter office, which his previous acquaintance with all classes in Delhi must have made comparatively easy, for six months, he went off, in July 1836, to his 'substantive' appointment in the southern division. The work, the country, the people of the southern division, differed in many respects from the northern, and so tended to give him that variety of experience on which he placed so much value. Extending, as it did, over an area of about 2,000 square miles, and containing a population of 700,000 souls, of whom, probably, one half were Hindus, the other half Mohammedans, it included representatives of all the races with whom he had become acquainted in Paniput.

But, besides these, there were many others, such as the Meenas and Mehwatties, of whom he had no previous knowledge. These people were great robbers, perhaps the greatest in Northern India. In former times, they had been organised plunderers, roaming about the country almost in small armies, and harrying the villages with fire and sword up to the very walls of Delhi. Even now, though restrained from open violence and proving under a strong government almost a docile people, they were very thievish in their propensities, and gave abundant proof that they only wanted opportunity to fall back on their old habits. Like the Ranghurs of the northern district, they were all Mohammedans who had been converted from Hinduism as late as the time of Aurungzebe, and, of course, retained many of their Hindu customs and traditions. Many a conversation did John Lawrence have with them on those good old times. They talked as freely with him as he with them, and frankly avowed that they looked back regretfully on the palmy days when, to use the words of their favourite adage, 'the buffalo belonged to him who held the bludgeon' — *Jiskee lattee oosee ka bhains*.

The district was particularly well adapted for the indulgence of their predatory propensities. It was irregularly shaped, was bordered on two sides by independent chieftainships, and was intersected by many low ranges of hills and by the deep beds of hill-torrents which ran dry in all

seasons except during the rains, and, like the wadies of the Arabian or Syrian deserts, served as the resort of banditti, who sallied out thence on any travellers who ventured to pass without sufficient escort. 'Many a strange story,' says John Lawrence, 'did the people of the country tell of the doings of their ancestors in this way.'

The difficulties of ruling such a people were not lessened by the calamitous drought which in 1837-38 had fallen on many parts of Upper India and, following so soon after that of 1833-34, had caused great suffering, even when it did not reach the dread extremity of actual starvation. The chief force of the visitation fell on the native states of Rajpootana, Bhurtpore, and Bundelkhund; but the Agra division of the North-West Provinces, including the districts of Agra, Etawa, and Mynpoorie, also suffered much, and there was terrible loss of life. In John Lawrence's own district, though the distress was great, no lives were lost. The soil, unlike the clay of many parts of Northern India, which bakes as hard as iron, is of a light porous character, and does not need much rain. Moreover, the district was well supplied with wells and jheels which could be used for the purpose of irrigation. Thus it happened that, owing to the constant care and energy of John Lawrence and his colleague, the well-known Martin Gubbins, notwithstanding the general distress and the predatory and warlike character of the people; notwithstanding also the fact that not one single soldier was stationed in the district; yet crime and violence were kept within moderate limits. If they did not actually decrease, they did not increase; and there are times and occasions when, to be able to say with truth that crimes of violence have not increased, is tantamount to saying that extraordinary exertions have been crowned by the success which they deserve.

From the southern division of the Delhi district, which had been spared, as I have already shown, the full fury of the famine which had visited the North-West, John Lawrence was called off to a district in which it had done its worst. He was specially selected, in November 1838, for the post of 'settlement officer' at Etawa by Robert Mertins Bird, a man whose name is little known to Englishmen generally, and who, it is to be feared, is, at this distance of time, little

remembered even among the 23,000,000 inhabitants of the North-West Provinces whom he did so much to save from misery and ruin. But his services are not to be measured by the little noise they made in the world, or by the little or no reward which they received. After serving, for twenty years of his life, as a judge, he suddenly joined the Revenue Department, a department which has proved to so many the study and despair of a lifetime. He was soon recognised as the chief living authority on the subject, and he managed, during the next thirteen years, to plan and to carry through a measure which was as complicated and difficult as it was vast and complete, the survey and settlement of the whole of the North-West Provinces. On returning to England, after thirty-three years' service, amidst the warm appreciation of all who knew what he had done, and how he had done it, he lived quite unnoticed, and passed to his grave without a single external mark of distinction.

Such is the lot—the lot borne uncomplainingly and even gratefully—of many of our best Indian administrators. One here, and one there, rise to fame and honour, but the rest live a life of unceasing toil, wield a power which, within its sphere, is such as few European sovereigns wield, and with an absolute devotion to the good of their subjects such as few European sovereigns show. They have to be separated from their children during the most impressible period of their life, and the wife is often obliged to prefer the claims of the children to those of her husband. India can thus be no longer, in any true sense of the word, a home to them, and when at length they return to England, they do so, too often, broken in health, find themselves unnoticed and unknown, strangers even to their own children, and settle down from a position of semi-regal influence into, say, a semi-detached villa, visited by few save some half-dozen old civilians like themselves, who have borne with them the burden and heat of the Indian sun, and now drop in, from time to time, to talk over old days and interests which are all in all to them, but of which the outside world knows nothing at all. Verily they have their reward; but it is a reward such as few outsiders can understand or appreciate.

To have been selected by Robert Bird as a helper in the great work in which he was engaged was looked upon, ever

afterwards, as a feather in the cap even of those who, from luck or otherwise, were destined soon to eclipse the fame of their old patron. John Lawrence, afterwards a first-rate revenue authority himself, was reluctant to leave his harder and therefore, as he deemed it, pleasanter work at Gurgaon, but he felt that a call by Robert Bird was a call to be obeyed. He learned in his school, fully sympathised with his noble motives, and, to a great extent, adopted his views. It is doubly incumbent, therefore, on the biographer of John Lawrence to pay a warm, if only a humble and a passing tribute; to a man to whom he owed so much and of whom his countrymen know so little.

When, in the earlier part of the nineteenth century the conquests of Sir Arthur Wellesley and Lord Lake had laid so large a part of Northern India at our feet, the first question that pressed for decision was the method in which the cost of its administration could best be met. The theory in all Eastern states is that a certain proportion—very variable in amount—of the produce of the land belongs of right to the Government; and, in India, the theory is supplemented by the clear understanding that if the owner pays that proportion to the Government he cannot be disturbed in possession. But with whom was the agreement for the payment of the state dues to be made? In other words, who were the rightful owners? In Bengal, at all events, we had set ourselves an example for all future time of how not to do it. For, under the auspices of Lord Cornwallis, a 'permanent settlement' of the land revenue had been made, very possibly with the best motives, but with the worst results—at the cost that is of 'permanent' injury alike to the Government and to the best portion of its subjects. It had been made without sufficient inquiry as to who the true proprietors were, or what the future capabilities of the soil might be. It seemed more natural, and was certainly more easy, for Government to make an agreement with the one big man who made himself out to be the richest and most influential inhabitant, than with a large number of smaller men; with one zemindar, as he was called in Bengal, rather than with a hundred ryots or their representatives. And, as the result of the 'permanent settlement,' these zemindars woke up one morning and found

themselves transformed by us into landowners—superseding, that is, the true hereditary proprietors, and reducing them to the rank of tenants-at-will, or little better, and often at exorbitant rents. These very zemindars, however, were, owing to the introduction of the 'law of sale,' liable, in their turn, to be evicted by other capitalists or speculators less scrupulous even than themselves.

These were mistakes, which it might have been supposed that, taught by experience, we could easily avoid, in the revenue arrangements for the North-West. We only succeeded, however, in very partially avoiding them. We had become conscious of our ignorance of the conditions under which alone a permanent settlement might advantageously be thought of, and so had taken the initial step towards knowledge. Settlements were accordingly now made, not in perpetuity, but only for a short term of years, and not till after some inquiry had been made as to who the true owners were. But, unfortunately, the men we pitched upon as the proper landowners turned out again, in many cases, to be nothing of the kind. The 'sale law,' as though it had not done injustice enough in Bengal, was transported into the North-West, and the assessments made were extortionately high, often amounting to a half of the gross produce. In vain did the proprietors rush to the local courts for protection. Protection the judges of the local courts could not give, bound down as they were by strict legal rules and ignorant of the history and peculiarities of the people. What scanty means of subsistence remained to the true proprietor, the meshes of the law carried off. Confusion became worse confounded. Estates were often put up for sale in the ignorance of the owner, and bought at merely nominal prices by intriguing native officers. And then, when the mischief had been half done, we tried to undo it. Rhadamanthus-like, though with anything but rhadamanthine motives, we punished first, and discovered what the offence was, or was not, afterwards.

In 1822, Holt Mackenzie introduced what has been justly called the 'Magna Charta of the village communities in India,' all the more justly, perhaps, that, like Magna Charta, its provisions were not at once carried out into practice, and that, like Magna Charta also, it needed to be renewed

and developed in later times. From various causes, which need not be mentioned here, the revision of the settlement, as arranged by him, made little progress for some ten years, but at last, in 1833, under the Governor-Generalship of Lord William Bentinck, the man for the work was found in Robert Bird. He threw inexhaustible energy and fire into a task for which he had been long prepared, alike by an extensive knowledge of the inhabitants of the North-West Provinces, and by a special, though quite unofficial, study of the subject. He avoided most of the mistakes which had crippled the execution of his predecessor's project, and suggested a simple method for determining, cheaply and at once, the interminable disputes as to ownership and boundaries by the summoning of a village jury on the spot, under the supervision of the Commissioners. Allowed to choose his own men, he selected the very best for the purpose that could be found in the whole of India, whether from the civil service or the army. Witness it the names of Thomason, Reade, and Mansel, of Edmonstone and of James Abbott, of Henry and of John Lawrence. In a few years, every village over an area of 72,000 square miles was measured, every field mapped, the nature of the soil recorded, and the assessment fixed at a moderate rate for a period of some twenty years.\* Such was the great work in which John Lawrence was now called to bear a part.

It is not to be supposed that a work so gigantic could be carried through without many mistakes and without involving, in special cases, considerable injustice. A change of government always implies injustice. In Eastern countries it has too often implied a total overthrow of all existing rights. And, apart from this, Eastern notions are in many ways so essentially different from Western, that what is the highest right in our eyes may well seem the highest wrong in theirs. Now the governing principle of the new settlement was, that the true proprietors were the village cultivators, and that any middle-men who came between them and the Government, as contractors for the revenue, were interlopers, drones who consumed the honey in a hive which was not too well stocked with it. No one will deny

\* See the whole subject discussed in Raikes's *North-West Provinces of India*, chap. ii., and Kaye's *Sepoy War*, vol. i. chap. iv.

that there was much truth in this ; few, on the other hand, will now be found to say—not even the most thorough-going of the settlement officers of that time who still survive—that it was the whole truth. The hereditary revenue contractors—talukdars as they were called in the North-West, zemindars as they were called in Bengal—were not necessarily proprietors as well. They might, or might not, be owners, in part or the whole, of the district for which they contracted. But, though the two things were quite independent of each other, it is important to note here that each involved in the Eastern mind notions of property.

In the North-West Provinces it was certainly high time to make a settlement of some kind, for anything would be better than the uncertainty and the want of method which had prevailed for upwards of a quarter of a century. Now, in every elaborate scheme there must be some one or more governing principles, and, on the whole, the governing principle selected by Robert Bird was as near the truth as any general principle could be, and, whatever its shortcomings, was more likely to secure the greatest happiness of the greatest number than any other. But it is said to have been carried out by some of the officers concerned too sweepingly and with too little consideration. They looked upon every talukdar as if he had necessarily gained his position by force or fraud. In their opinion, therefore, he was lucky enough if he got any money compensation for his loss of territorial influence ; he deserved rather to be made to disgorge what he and his family had been wrongfully devouring during a long course of years.

It can be easily understood how good men might take opposite views on such a subject as this, and, in the settlement of the North-West, both sides had able representatives, though the reforming party were in the majority. On the side of the talukdars was Robertson, the Lieutenant-Governor of the North-West, Robert C. Hamilton, Commissioner of Agra, and, in a subordinate capacity, Henry Lawrence, a host in himself, who had lately obtained an appointment in the survey, on the recommendation of his brother George. On the side of the village communities was the still higher authority of the Revenue Board, with Robert Bird at its head, Thomason the future Lieutenant-Governor of the

North-West, and most of the rank and file of the settlement officers, reinforced now by another Lawrence, who was also a host in himself—John Lawrence. And, as in the case of the more famous Board which administered the Punjab later on, it may be hoped that where both sides were so ably represented something like an equilibrium was established, and that the injustice which would have been done by either party, if it had had its own way entirely, was reduced to a minimum by the keen criticism which each proposition received from those who opposed it.

The district of Etawa, which fell to John Lawrence's charge, lay on the left bank of the Jumna and adjoined Agra and Mynpoorie. It had suffered dreadfully from the drought and was still feeling its effects when, in November 1838, John Lawrence arrived as its 'settlement officer.' The land revenue had, of course, completely broken down, and the land tenures were in great disorder. Here John Lawrence saw for the first time, with his own eyes, the horrors of an Indian famine; here, by daily contact with the starving people, he learned to sympathise with their sufferings in their full intensity; and here, once more, he gathered together and treasured up for future use those maxims which he was afterwards to apply in so careful and yet so magnificent a manner, in his administration of the Punjab—the duty of a rigid economy in all the departments of government which admit of it, in order that the expenditure may be all the more lavish on the best and the only means of avoiding such terrible calamities for the future—the construction of tanks and canals, of roads and bridges.

The population of India, it must always be remembered, are almost entirely agricultural; their wealth consists of their labour and their flocks alone, and in a year of famine the value of these falls at once to zero. From a commercial people a famine cuts off only one out of many sources of subsistence; from an agricultural it cuts off all at once. At such times the prices of food for cattle range even higher than those of food for man. In this particular year, while corn rose to about ten, hay and other food for cattle rose to not less than sixteen times their usual value. A good cow could be bought for a rupee. Artificial irrigation, in the extent to which it has now been carried in India, en-



tures, even in the worst seasons, a considerable supply of grain; whereas the grass lands, which receive no help either from earth or heaven, are utterly scorched up. Indeed, it is not the least tragical part of the prolonged tragedy of an Indian famine, that there are often considerable stores of food within reach of the starving people which they have no means of procuring. They see, but they may not taste thereof. Like Tantalus, they starve in the midst of plenty.

'It is owing to the agricultural character of the population and the difficult means of communication,' says John Lawrence, as he looked back in 1845 from his post of Magistrate and Collector of Delhi on what he had witnessed at Gurgaon and Etawa seven years before, 'that India suffers so dreadfully from famine, and not, as has been so unreasonably supposed, from the exactions of the English Government. The demands of Government, if not particularly moderate in themselves, seem moderate when compared with those of the native governments, and with the little that, under those governments, the people get in return. Give India good roads and canals, increase in every way the facilities of communication, and encourage the employment of capital on its resources, and then more will be done to obviate the recurrence of famines than in any other way that can be devised.' So much has been done since 1845 in the direction here pointed out that John Lawrence's words read now like truisms. But they were not truisms then.

Thousands of natives in these two disastrous years (1838-39) left their homes in the North-West Provinces and wandered from place to place in the vain hope of getting food. Many lay down and died by the roadside, and it was no uncommon thing for John Lawrence, as he went for his morning ride, to see the bodies of those who had perished in the preceding night half-eaten by wolves or jackals which, lured by the scent of human carrion, went prowling about the country in packs, and held a ghastly revelry over the gaunt victims of the famine. It was a remark often made in his hearing, that the taste for human flesh acquired by these usually skulking and cowardly animals gave them, for years to come, courage to invade the haunts of men, and invested them, for the nonce, with the awe-inspiring attributes of man-eating or child-eating tigers.

John Lawrence's work at Etawa was, as I have said, of a much less absorbing kind than any which he had hitherto undertaken, and he disliked it proportionately. Before he could begin his proper duties it was necessary that the whole country should be surveyed in a scientific manner, and the boundaries of all the villages determined. While this was being done by native officers, John Lawrence managed to find some employment for himself in giving temporary relief in superintending the detailed field measurements on which the revised settlements were to be founded, and in hearing all disputes connected with proprietary and tenant-rights or with village boundaries. Work of this kind was not new to him, for, in the transitional state in which the Delhi district then was, he had managed to combine, both at Paniput and Gurgaon, much of the work of a settlement officer with that of a collector. I was fortunate enough in the case of Paniput to be able to quote the testimony of the one man who could speak from direct personal experience of John Lawrence's work there. So now, in the case of Etawa, I am able to give a few particulars of his work and doings which have been communicated to me by the only Englishman who had any opportunity of observing them.

I am afraid (writes Mr. J. Cumine of Rattray, Aberdeenshire) that I am the only person now living who can tell you anything of Lawrence during the year 1838-39, in which he and I lived in the closest intimacy at Etawa, he being the settlement officer, while I was the magistrate and collector. It was then a newly-formed district, and houses being very scarce, the one occupied by me was the only one available for Lawrence to live in. We, of course, shared it together. He did not like the appointment, as he had been far more actively employed before in various parts of the Delhi territory; but being specially selected by Robert Bird, who had a very high opinion of him, he accepted it. The initial business of a settlement imposes little work upon the officer in charge, and Lawrence fretted under the want of it.

I may here remark, that, in a letter which has come into my hands, written by Lawrence to this same friend from Lahore in 1846, after describing the various places in which he had taken temporary work since his return to India from furlough, he thus refers to his life at Etawa: 'I took

particular care to avoid that hole Etawa, where you and I were so nearly buried seven years ago.'

'He joined (Mr. Cumine went on to say) most heartily and happily in all the few recreations which, in the intervals of work, were available in such a dull place, and which, now, seem somewhat boyish. In the morning there was pigeon-shooting on the shady side of the house—an amusement in which it may safely be said he would not have joined had it involved any of its more odious and more modern associations of cruelty and gambling, and worse—in the afternoon there would be games of quoits, or swimming in a large bath accompanied by some rough horse-play. Lawrence was an excellent shot, but the game was of a much tamer kind than the nobler animals in the pursuit of which he afterwards so much distinguished himself in the Jullundur Doab. It consisted only of quails, hares, and grey and black partridges. He was as pleasant a companion and friend as I ever met with. We were nearly of the same age, and, as we were both keenly interested in everything relating to our work, we were never separated except when we were at our respective offices. Our very charpoys at night were under the same punkah. I observed the clear decided way in which he formed a judgment upon all subjects, and the energy with which he set about his work. His resemblance to Cromwell in these and other respects struck me so much that I called him Oliver, thus jocularly expressing my sense of his vigour and determination.'

The many points of resemblance between John Lawrence and one of the greatest and most downright and God-fearing of Englishmen did not strike this early friend alone. They have struck portrait-painters and sculptors and friends without number, and, now that he has been taken from us full of years and honours, they have been pointed out in scores of newspaper articles and periodicals and sermons; but it is not without interest to note how early in life the parallel first suggested itself, and to name the friend whom, as it seems, it was the first to strike.

Like Cromwell, John Lawrence was rough and downright in all he said and did. Like Cromwell, he cared naught for appearances, spoke his mind freely, swept all cobwebs out of his path, worked like a horse himself, and insisted on hard work in others. The natives, if they did not love him, regarded him with veneration and with trust, at all events, as somebody to be obeyed. They respect a man who will be down upon them in a moment for anything that is wrong, provided only that he is scrupulously just, and this John Lawrence always was. His voice was loud, his presence

commanding ; his grey eye, deep-set and kindly as it was, glared terribly when it was aroused by anything mean or cowardly or wrong. His temper—the Lawrences were all naturally quick-tempered—was generally well under control ; but when he felt, like Jonah, ‘that he did well to be angry,’ there was no mistake at all about it. ‘What do you think of John Lawrence up at Etawa ?’ asked his old schoolfellow, Robert Montgomery—who was then magistrate at Cawnpore and had not seen him much since he came to India—of one of the native settlement officers whom John had sent thither ; ‘what do you think of John Lawrence ? Does he work well and keep you at it ?’ ‘Doesn’t he !’ replied the awe-stricken native ; ‘when he is in anger his voice is like a tiger’s roar, and the pens tremble in the hands of the writers all round the room.’

During his year’s residence at Etawa, Lawrence paid frequent visits to the house of his immediate superior—Robert North Collie Hamilton—the commissioner of Agra. Hamilton belonged to the school in revenue matters which held doctrines the opposite to those which were just then in vogue. He thought that the talukdars and chieftains, especially the Raja of Mynpoorie and Etawa itself, were being hardly dealt with, for they were to lose, henceforward, all power in their talukdaries, and to be restricted to a percentage or fixed sum in cash (malikana). He pointed out that such a policy tended to deprive the Government of the support of those natives who could have done most to help them in their measures for education, for police, and for public works, and that the power of these natural rulers would slip into the hands of far less scrupulous persons—the village bankers and money-lenders. But these differences of opinion in no way affected the friendship of the two men ; and Hamilton, as we shall hereafter see, went out of his way to give John Lawrence an excellent start again after his return from furlough—a service which John Lawrence ever afterwards remembered, and gratefully acknowledged.

One of the most important duties which fell to his lot as settlement officer at Etawa was the demarcation of the village boundaries when there was a dispute respecting them which the native agents were unable to decide. The work was by

no means new to him ; for, from his early days at Paniput, he had set himself to study the native society of India in all its aspects, and, in particular, that most characteristic and essential element of all—the village community. It was to conversations with Lord Lawrence upon this subject that, some forty years later, Sir Henry Maine, in his preface to his well-known work on 'Village Communities in the East and West,' tells us that he owed much of the knowledge of the phenomena of Indian society which enabled him to write it ; and, as he truly observes, it was the patient study of the ideas and usages of the natives of India during his early career which so eminently fitted Lord Lawrence for the supreme rule of the country.

Towards the end of 1839, before the time had come for the heavier portion of the settlement work at Etawa, John Lawrence and his friend Cumine were both taken seriously ill, and the district found itself deprived at once of its collector and its settlement officer. Cumine was the first to recover, and was at once moved down to a healthier climate at Allahabad, but John Lawrence's illness was much more severe. It was an attack of jungle fever. During nearly a month his life was in danger, and, for a time, it was despaired of. And here I may give an anecdote which he used to tell himself, and is not a little characteristic of his energy and determination. He had often been heard to say, in the abounding and jubilant strength of his youth, that he was sure that many a man need not die, if he made up his mind not to do so. But he was now rapidly becoming worse and appeared to be in a state of collapse. One day, the doctor who had been attending him told him that he feared he could hardly live till the following morning, and took leave of him accordingly. No sooner was he gone than his patient roused himself to the emergency. Now was the chance of putting his favourite maxim to the test. He determined not to die, and bade his servant give him a bottle of burgundy which lay in a box beneath his bed. He drank it off, and, next day, when the doctor called, by way of form, expecting to find that all was over, he found John Lawrence sitting up at his desk, clothed and in his right mind, and actually casting up his settlement accounts !

As soon as he was sufficiently recovered from his illness

to bear the fatigue of moving, he was driven down, for the last time, through the 'familiar streets of old ruinous Etawa' to the ghaut, was put on board a boat, and, in company with his friend Major Wroughton, who had helped to nurse him through his illness, dropped down the 'clear cold stream of the Jumna' to Allahabad. Here he rejoined his colleague Cumine, who had gone thither in a country cargo-boat shortly before, and had spent a fortnight on the voyage. On November 19, they all set off again down the Ganges for Calcutta. The change of air and rest brought back health and strength apace, and gave them after their long starvation, as Cumine expressed it, the 'appetite of an ostrich.' At Ghazipore they met Robert Tucker, who was afterwards murdered in his own house during the Mutiny. They spent one day with him, a second at Dinapore, and a third at Monghir, walking about 'its grassy plain, formerly the bustling interior of the fort.' One night they passed at Chander-nagore, and they arrived in Calcutta, at Spence's Hotel, on December 22. Here John Lawrence had a dangerous relapse, and, on his recovery, he was ordered by his doctor to go on furlough for three years, and, after a three months' stay in Calcutta, necessitated by his weak state, and another three months spent on the voyage home, he arrived in England in June 1840.

Here, then, ends the first stage of John Lawrence's Indian career, the period of his training and probation. He had passed through all the grades of a young civilian's education, not in their regular order, but, as often happened in the Delhi territory, piled one upon the other and mixed up together in such a way as to give him the greatest possible amount and variety of experience in the smallest possible space of time. He was fortunate, certainly, in the places to which he had been posted—Delhi, Paniput, Gurgaon, Etawa—and he was fortunate also, on the whole, in the men with whom, whether as his superiors or his colleagues, he had hitherto been brought into contact. But here the work of fortune ended. His own energy, his own endurance, his own courage, his own self-reliance, his own enthusiasm for work, above all, his own sympathy with the natives, had done all the rest. If in these first ten years he had risen, as one who had the best right to speak expressed it, 'half

a head above his fellows,' he owed that rise not to high birth or patronage or favour or luck of any kind, but to his own intrinsic merits. And, perhaps, I cannot better end these chapters which I have dedicated to the earlier and more adventurous, and probably, in some respects, the happier part of his career, than by quoting the graphic sketch given of it in the 'Leisure Hour,' 1860, by one who afterwards served under him for many years in the Punjab, was one of his most intimate and trusted friends, and was selected by him to write the life of his illustrious brother, Sir Henry Lawrence.

John Lawrence (says Sir Herbert Edwardes) soon had to leave headquarters at Delhi and go out into the district; and it was there, away from all Europeans, thrown upon the natives for help, obedience, usefulness, success, and even sympathy, that the John Lawrence of great days was trained. He worked hard and made his 'omlah'—native functionary—do the same, ever on the watch to bar bribery, by being sole master in his own court. Then was his day of details—a day that comes once, and only once, to all apprentices—and he seized it, laying up a store of knowledge of all kinds, official, revenue, judicial, social, agricultural, commercial; learning, in fact, to *know* the races which it was his lot to rule. Work over, out into the fields with horse or gun; for his strong frame and hardy spirit loved wild sports. But ever an eye to business—some jungle lair of cutthroats to be explored, some scene of crime to be examined by the way, some slippery underling to be surprised. And so, home at sunset, with fine appetite for the simple meal that he eats who has others in the world to help. After that, more air—for the nights are hot—an easy chair outside in the bright moonlight, with our large John in it, without coat or waistcoat, and shirt-sleeves up over his elbows, his legs on another chair, a bowl of tea by his side, and a tobacco weed in his mouth, smoking grandly; altogether much at home, a giant in the act of refreshment. One by one the greybeards of the district drop in too; not particular in dress, but just as the end of the day left them, uninvited, but quite welcome, and squat, Eastern fashion, on their heels and ankles, in a respectfully feudal ring, about their Saxon khan, each wishing 'peace' as he sits down. A pleasant scene this of human black and white mingling into grey under an Indian moon. The chat is all about the district and the people, bygone traditions of the last conquest by the Moguls, and how they parcelled it out to their great lords, who built those red-brick towers near the wells, still standing, though, happily, decayed by peace; the changes they have all seen since they were young; the beating of the sword and spear into the ploughshare; the disappearance of that celebrated breed of long-winded horses; the increase of buffaloes; the capture year by year, and one by one, of those renowned dacoits, of whom John Lawrence himself rode down the last; the great famine,

and which villages died off and which lived through, as witness their present state, known to all sitting here; the debts and lawsuits that grew therefrom, and the endless case that's coming on in court to-morrow, about which John, listening, picks up some truths; and so on till midnight, when, the air being cool enough for sleep, the white khan yawns and the dark elders take their leave, much content with this kind of Englishman.



## CHAPTER V.

FURLOUGH AND MARRIAGE. 1840-1842.

JOHN LAWRENCE reached his home at Clifton. But it was not the home which he had left. No one, I suppose, ever returned to his home after an absence of ten years, especially if his family happened to have been a large one, without finding at least as much cause to miss the absent as to rejoice in those that are present. Of those who loved him, and whom he loved best, he will be likely to find

That the old friends all are fled,  
And the young friends all are wed,

and that, even of those who are neither the one nor the other, some at least will necessarily be dead to him. Ten years are a large slice, as many a returned Anglo-Indian has found to his cost, of the allotted threescore and ten, and the gap made by them in interests and occupations and sympathies, even between hearts that are naturally loving and sympathetic, is so wide that the currents of life, which have issued from the same fountain-head, and are destined it may be, like the two great rivers of China, to approach one another again towards their close, are often found, in the dead level of middle life, to be meandering, like those same two rivers, in channels which are very far apart.

Two great changes had taken place in the Clifton home since John Lawrence had left it. The fine old father, who had entertained his son during his youthful walks with so many stories of his adventurous campaigns, and who might, had he lived, have listened now, in his turn, in the chair of dozing age, to stories of adventures at least as strange and as stirring from the lips of that same son, had ended his

rugged life in peace, in May 1835, at the age of seventy-three. His eldest son, Alexander, who is said to have been his favourite, had returned from Madras just in time to gladden his father's eyes, and then to close them in death.

The other change was almost as great. John's eldest sister Letitia, whose pre-eminent claims on their affection and respect had, from their earliest youth, been so promptly recognised by all her brothers, had herself left the parental home, and married a venerable old clergyman, Mr. Hayes, who seems to have been unknown to the family before.

Happily, the kind and simple-hearted mother whom I have described at the outset of this biography was still living, and in comparative comfort, though not upon the fortune left her by her husband. Ever ready, as he had been in his Irish generosity, to share his last crust or his last shilling with a friend, the old veteran had left her nothing but his name, his spirit, and his sons. She was living therefore on the proceeds of a fund which, all unknown to her, had, for years past, been gradually accumulating, from the contributions of her four gallant sons—not one of whom had more than a bare sufficiency of this world's goods—in India. It was called by them the 'Lawrence Fund,' and had been started, in the first instance, by Henry. It was Henry who—to quote the words of a letter of his own—'had rather dunned' the more tardy and cautious John into taking it up at first, but had soon found, as the same letter generously goes on to acknowledge, that, once committed to the scheme, John had put 'all the other brothers to shame' by the zeal that he had thrown into it. It was John, henceforward, who managed the fund, who contributed largely to it, who directed the successive investments, and, more than this, acted as the financier of the family generally.

How the aged mother welcomed her son John, the chief manager of the family purse and a generous contributor to her income, we do not know from any written document, for I have been unable to meet with any letter, or entry, at all analogous to that in which she notes the change which three years' absence had produced in her elder son Henry, when he had first returned from India. It is clear that he did not recover from the effects of his illness for some time. But all the accounts which have reached me represent him

as in the most exuberant spirits, travelling about from one country to another, seeing all that was to be seen, in full pursuit of what is commonly supposed to be the leading object of a young civilian on furlough from India, and enjoying all the vicissitudes of the pursuit, its ups and its downs, its hopes and its fears, in a way which is highly indicative of his good-humoured frankness and manly directness of character.

In August, two months after he landed, we find him at Glasgow. There he met his Etawa friend, Cumine, and took a tour with him through the Western Highlands—a tour which was doubly interesting to him, as Sir Walter Scott's names and localities were always fresh in his memory. Of Scott, indeed, in common with so many of his generation, he was passionately and justly fond. His boyhood had been nursed upon 'the great enchanter's' writings, especially upon the more historical of his novels. They were among the few books which he was either able, or disposed, to read in the heyday of his working life in India; and one of the very last books read to him by his lady secretary, Miss Gaster, long after his sight had gone, and not a few premonitory symptoms of his approaching end had come upon him, was 'Guy Mannering'—read then for I am afraid to say what number of times!

In September he went to Ireland, and revisited Foyle College and the ramparts of Londonderry. And it was while he was on a visit to Mr. Young of Culdaff House, in County Donegal, the squire of the parish, and near neighbour of its rector, the Rev. Richard Hamilton, that he met for the first time the lady who was eventually to share his destinies. Nothing appears to have been either said or done then which at all implied what was to follow a year later; but 'all the Hamilton family felt that a new and wonderful element had come into their lives, and his vivacity and stories were a theme of constant conversation among them.' The red-hot Tory creed, in which they had been naturally brought up, received many a rough and kindly shock from the reforming views of the young Indian civilian.

Later on in the autumn, John Lawrence paid a visit to the Continent, and took up his quarters for some months at Bonn with his much-loved sister-in-law, Mrs. George Lawrence,

## FURLOUGH AND MARRIAGE.

whose husband was in Afghanistan. 'He kept open house,' says Colonel Ramsay, who met him there, 'and was a great favourite with many of the students. Amongst them were Prince Holstein, now the King of Denmark, Prince Frederick of Hesse, his future brother-in-law, Prince Mecklenberg-Schwerin, the present Sir Vincent Corbet, myself, and others, and many a pleasant evening we passed in his house. Years afterwards, when I was on the Headquarters Staff at the Horse Guards, on the arrival in this country of Prince Christian of Denmark, formerly Prince Holstein, with his daughter, now the Princess of Wales, and the Prince of Hesse, they all, remembering me as a fellow student at Bonn, asked with much interest what had become of Mr. John Lawrence, of whose hospitalities they retained so pleasant a recollection.' These hospitalities, it will be easily understood, soon exhausted his purse, which was not, at that time, a heavy one, and he was obliged early in the year to return to England and live more economically among his friends.

It was during a stay at Lynton that John Lawrence paid a visit to his friend and relative, the famous John Sterling, who was then living at Falmouth. In the near neighbourhood of Falmouth was Penjerrick, the now almost classic abode of the Fox family—the home of everything that was pure and lovely and of good report. It was not likely that Sterling would allow John Lawrence to leave his house without introducing him to a family amongst whom he was so frequent and welcome a visitor; and in the 'Journals and Letters of Caroline Fox,' one of the most lovable of women, I find the following entry referring to the visit of the young Indian civilian :—

1841. May 10.—Amusing day. J. Sterling has a friend and connection here, a Mr. Lawrence, an Indian judge, and he brought him to call. India the principal topic. Lawrence was describing an illness in which he was most tenderly nursed and borne with by his native servants. 'Yes,' said Sterling, 'patience, submission, and fortitude are the virtues which characterise an enslaved nation; their magnanimity and heroism are all of the passive kind.' Lawrence spoke of the stationary kind of progress which Christianity was making amongst them. When a native embraces this new creed, he retains his old inveterate prejudices and superadds only the liberty of the new faith. This Lawrence has repeatedly proved, so much so that he would on no account take one of these converts into his service. All his hope is in the education of the

children, who are bright and intelligent. The Indians will from politeness believe all you tell them, and if you speak of any of Christ's miracles, they make no difficulty, but directly detail one more marvellous of which Mohammed was the author, and expect your civility of credence to keep pace with theirs. If you try to convince them of any absurdities or inconsistencies in the Koran, they stop you with, 'Do you think that such an one as I should presume to understand it?' Sterling remarked, 'Have you never heard anything like that in England?'

May 24.—Joseph Bonaparte, his son and grandson, in the harbour (Falmouth); Barclay and Lawrence visited them under the shade of the American consulate. They shook hands and conversed with the old man for some time, and admired exceedingly for some time the little boy, who is the image of Napoleon. His father, the Prince Charles Bonaparte, a fine-looking man.\*

Once more, in June 1844, John Lawrence returned to Ireland, leaving the fashionable and ball-going beauties of Bath and Cheltenham and Lynton—

for some three careless moons  
The summer pilots of an empty heart  
Unto the shores of nothing

—without regret behind him; and there, on his renewed meeting with the young Irish maiden, the best part of whose life had been passed in the wilds of Donegal, and who combined, as the result proved, all the charms which we usually associate with a beautiful Irish girl—simplicity, sprightliness, vivacity, and grace—with those more solid qualities which were to make her the worthy companion and sharer and comforter of the most laborious and heroic of lives, even to the very end, he found as the result of his prolonged 'search' among girls who might have momentarily attracted him, that

Such touches were but embassies of love,  
To tamper with the feelings ere he found  
Empire for life.

An empire for life indeed it was, as the course of this biography, without, it is to be hoped, lifting too much of the veil which hangs, and ought to hang, before the bridal chambers of the heart, will abundantly show. And John

\* *Caroline Fox: Her Journals and Letters*, p. 238, etc. Edited by Horace N. Pym. Smith, Elder, & Co. 1882.

Lawrence found that love henceforward not only ruled his life but trebled it within him.

The Hamiltons, offshoots of the ducal family of that name in Scotland, had first crossed into Ireland in the time of Queen Elizabeth. One of them, who had done good service to King James in the country of his adoption, was rewarded by him with large estates in County Down, and was created Viscount Clandeboye and Dufferin. His other brothers also became large landowners in Ireland, and from one of these Harriette Hamilton was directly descended. Her grandfather, James Hamilton, of Sheep Hill in County Dublin, is said to have married three times, and to have been blessed with a family of truly patriarchal dimensions. Sir Bernard Burke credits him with thirty-six sons and daughters; but the family tradition runs that there were thirty-nine in all—a tradition confirmed by the witticisms current at the time, some of which, turning on the Protestant orthodoxy of a family which owed so much to it, compared them to the Thirty-nine Articles; while others, taking the prudential view, suggested that they were more akin to the 'forty stripes save one!'

Richard Hamilton, Harriette's father, was first presented to a living ten miles from Dublin, in County Meath. Like many of the livings of the good old times, it was considered to be a good living because there was so little to do in it. But the new rector was a man of great energy and courage, who, when he found that he had no work to do, would be sure to make it for himself; and having been appointed a justice of the peace, he found a field for his superabundant energies in playing, like his future son-in-law, the Collector-Magistrate of Delhi, the double rôle of policeman and magistrate.

A few years later—those being the days of pluralism—he was given the two rich livings of Culdaff and Cloncha in County Donegal, and he moved, with his infant family, from the rich and populous county of Meath, within ten miles of Dublin, to the remote and bleak coast of Ulster.

There Harriette Hamilton's early life was passed, till the arrival of John Lawrence with his unbounded vivacity, his marked originality of character, his splendid *physique*, and his stories of Indian adventure, came across its calm and even current. The engagement lasted two months only,

and on August 26, 1841, the marriage took place. It was of course a great event in the little parish, and rich and poor, high and low, Catholic and Protestant, came from far and near to do honour to the bride and her family.

To the unique and lifelong happiness of the union thus cemented, the whole course of this biography will bear witness, direct or indirect. I will quote here two testimonies only, and both shall be those of John Lawrence himself—the one conscious and deliberate, the other wholly unpremeditated and almost unconscious. In the fragment of the autobiography which I have so often quoted, and which was written, as I gather, about thirty years later, towards the close of his Viceroyalty, he writes: 'In August 1841 I took perhaps the most important, and certainly the happiest, step in my life—in getting married. My wife has been to me everything that a man could wish or hope for.'

The other testimony is still more to the point, because, as I have said, it is unconscious and, in its neatness and its intensity, is eminently characteristic of the man. John Lawrence was sitting, one evening, in his drawing-room at Southgate, with his wife, his sister Letitia, and other members of the family, and all of them were engaged in reading. Looking up from his book, in which he had been engrossed, he discovered to his surprise, that his wife had left the room. 'Where's mother?' said he to one of his daughters. 'She's upstairs,' replied the girl. He returned to his book, and, looking up again a few minutes later, put the same question to his daughter, and received the same answer. Once more he returned to his reading, and, once more, he looked up with the same question on his lips. His sister Letitia here broke in: 'Why, really, John, it would seem as if you could not get on for five minutes without your wife.' 'That's why I married her,' replied he.

The honeymoon was spent on the Continent. In a tour, which lasted from September 1841 to the following March, John Lawrence and his wife visited Belgium, France, Switzerland, and Italy. The birthday of the bride (November 14) was celebrated at Florence, and they reached Rome towards the close of the month. The mornings there were occupied in vigorous sight-seeing, and the evenings in as vigorous studies in Italian till the unhealthy climate produced the

effect that might have been expected on a constitution which had not yet quite recovered from the still worse climate of India ; and a letter of John Lawrence's to his friend Cumine speaks regretfully of his inability 'to enjoy life in a place where there was so much to see and do as in Rome.' They were accompanied during a part of their tour by Mr. and Mrs. Hayes. 'The honeymoon is past,' says Letitia, writing to a friend, 'and I have not seen a frown on either brow. I find that my brother can love his wife, and his sister none the less.'

The terrible news of the rising of the Afghan tribes on our demoralised army at Cabul, and of his brother George's captivity and too probable death, reached John Lawrence at Naples, and must have brought something more than 'a frown' to his brow. And in a letter, dashed off in the hottest haste to his sister-in-law, the wife of his brother Henry, he writes as follows :—

Naples: March 23, 1842.

My dear Honoria, I hardly know how to write to you the last mail has brought us such dreadful accounts the death of Sir Wm.[Macnaghten] poor George's imprisonment and probable death and the reported destruction of the whole Cabul army. Is certainly an amount of dreadfulness which has seldom come from India certainly never in my mind. The papers seem to think that neither George's nor MacKenzie's life were safe, I think that as they did not kill them at the moment of seizure they will spare their lives to exchange for their own prisoners. We are all here prepared for the worst, tho' as long as there is life there is hope. It seems that the whole business was dreadfully mismanaged—the allowing the supplies to be in a place where they could be cut off—the dividing the force; with a river without Bridge between them and lastly the consuming and wasting the morale of the force in desultory attacks, instead of attacking them at once. Altogether shows a want of management. I trust that the rumours of the force being attacked and destroyed subsequent to their evacuation will not prove true. It would seem to me to have been most feasible to have retreated through the open country to Ghuzni. You may fancy our anxiety for news. The general feeling previous to this disaster was that the sooner we get out of Afghanistan the better and Lord Ellenborough was said to have gone out with these views. I do not think now that we can leave the country without wiping off our disgrace—however enough of this. I propose leaving Naples on the 28th if the weather is fine for Marseilles by steam and thence to Paris where I shall be two days, and then to England. I am anxious to be there to look after Charlie and her chicks in the event of poor George's being no more. I heard from Mr. S. a couple of days ago it seemed they had not then told her of the dreadful news—should George be gone I am his executor . . . what you do pray write to me



as Henry will have little time for such things pray keep him out of Afghanistan if you can help it. I wish I was back in India all my thoughts and feelings are there. I am heartily tired of Italy. Letitia and Mr. Hayes travel back by land and probably will not be in England before June. They say eleven thousand troops are to be sent out to India though what is wanted with so many I don't see except with China. I don't think we have seen the last of that business—it seems quite interminable. This letter goes direct to Naples in the consul's bag. I wrote two or three by that route. Mind and write any particulars which transpire about George. I still live in hope that he may survive.

Yours ever affectionately,

JOHN.

And so the honeymoon ended, as it did for so many others, in that sad year, in sore anxiety, in sickening fears and almost more sickening hopes—for they were to be hopes long deferred—among all the branches of the Lawrence family. John Lawrence and his wife hurried back to London to be ready, in case their worst fears should prove true, to take charge of the widow and her children. But here he was seized with a long and dangerous illness which made his doctors tell him that he must give up all idea of returning to India. This was serious news enough, for his leave was drawing to a close. There was no apparent opening for him in England, and it was necessary to come to a decision at once. With his intense interest in his work in India, it did not probably cost him much to say that, whatever the risk might be, he was resolved to run it. 'If I can't live in India,' was his characteristic remark, 'I must go and die there.'

On his partial recovery, he went over to Ireland for a change, and paid a farewell visit to his wife's relations. He spent September at Clifton with his aged mother, whose heart was gladdened by the sight of 'nine of her children, and ten of her grandchildren' assembled around her, and he sailed from Southampton for India, by the Overland Route, on October 1, 1842. It was the last meeting, as neither of them could have failed to anticipate, between the mother and the son; but the pang of parting was lessened, at least to her motherly heart, by the knowledge that he was not returning to India alone. 'To see you happily married,' she had written to him while he was at Etawa in June 1839, 'will gladden my old heart ere I quit life;' and, on the day

before his marriage (on August 25, 1841), she had thus poured out her feelings in a letter to her son Henry : ' I cannot express how rejoiced I am that he [John] will, please God, take out with him an honest Irish lass from among his relatives, and so well known to them all. Marcia's account of her, will, I am sure, bear the test. I wish I could say what I think of her from my own experience, but the knowledge of his happiness is enough for me.' The opportunity for forming her own judgment in the important matter had now come and gone, and had convinced her that her son was not only as happy as he could be, but that he had the best of grounds for being so.

And so John Lawrence went out a second time from England to India ; still almost unnoticed and unknown ; his great capacities still unrecognised, and his brilliant future still not anticipated, even by his most intimate friends and relations, and he himself not a little anxious—and, as the result showed, not without reason—as to the occasion which India might now have for his services. He was to return to England, twenty years later, the observed of all observers, with his name a household word in India and in England, and with a whole people, whose best characteristics he so well combined, flocking from all parts to welcome him, and happy if they could catch but a sight of the grand and now familiar features of the ruler of the Punjab and the man who had done more than any other single man to save our Indian Empire.

## CHAPTER VI.

THE FIRST AFGHAN WAR. 1838-1842.

**D**URING the three years' absence of John Lawrence in England, the gloomiest and most disgraceful chapter of Anglo-Indian history—it may almost be said of the whole course of English history—had been brought to its close.

The story of the Afghan war is a thrice-told tale, and its moral, it is to be hoped, is graven with a pen of iron on the tablets of the nation's heart. With its design and progress John Lawrence had, of course, nothing to do. At first sight, therefore, it would seem to lie beyond the field, already sufficiently vast, of his biography. But, though he exercised no influence on the Afghan war, it exercised so profound an influence on him; it helped to give so decided a bent to the whole of his subsequent administration, whether as Chief Commissioner of the Punjab, or as Governor-General of India; it has so dominated the foreign policy of eight successive Governors-General during a period of some thirty-five years—that it is essential to a right understanding alike of John Lawrence himself, of his actions, and of his time, to indicate, in bare outline, the general causes and the successive steps which prepared the way for the catastrophe.

There was seated on the throne of Cabul, in the year 1837, Dost Mohammed, a man of genius, and one whose name will often recur in this biography. A usurper he may have been, according to European ideas; but in a country like Afghanistan such a man might fairly claim to be his own ancestry, and, as Eastern notions go, he was a wise and just ruler.

We accredited an envoy, Alexander Burnes by name, to his Court. He was one of the most adventurous and successful of our Eastern explorers, and he soon discovered that

the Afghan sovereign was anxious to form an alliance with us, and to reject all proposals for the counter-alliance which Persian and Russian agents had been pressing upon him. He assured his employers of his belief in the Dost's sincerity and pressed them to accept his proffered friendship as the best security against more serious dangers beyond. But this was too obvious and straightforward a course for men whom a religious Greek would have represented as blinded by the Goddess of Bane, and urged resistlessly onward towards their ruin. The man who was anxious to be our friend must be treated as an enemy. The sovereign chosen by the Afghans must be driven from his throne, and a feeble pretender, whom the Afghans had expelled, and who was living as a pensioner on our bounty, must be put in his place by force of arms. The question of right or wrong seems never to have occurred to the astute diplomatists who elaborated so foolish a policy. And when Alexander Burnes had fallen, the first victim of the policy which he had disapproved, and when our calamities did compel people at home to raise the embarrassing question of right or wrong, the despatches which had long been demanded by an indignant country were, from motives of State policy, published only with important omissions; the result being that Burnes, when he could no longer speak for himself, was represented as having recommended as politic and just a course of action which he had always condemned as impolitic and unjust.

But, meanwhile, Shah Soojah was fished by us out of his retirement; we formed an alliance with him and with the Sikhs, the hereditary enemies of the Afghans; an English army surmounted the dangers of the passes, drove Dost Mohammed, after a brave resistance, into exile, and, with the loss of some 70,000 camels—the life-blood, it should be remembered, of the countries from which they had been collected—succeeded in placing our puppet on the throne. Rewards were distributed by the English authorities with a liberal hand; the successful general, Sir John Keane, hastened home with his success and with a peerage; a large part of our army was recalled to India, and the remainder stayed behind simply to ensure the ‘benefits which we had conferred upon a reluctant people!’

At first, everything went ‘merry as a marriage bell.’

Dost Mohammed, after many romantic adventures in Central Asia, returned at the head of a host of Uzbeks, to measure his sword with us, and, after an engagement in which, by his gallantry, he deserved the success which he obtained, surprised everybody by his voluntary surrender. But it did not follow, because Dost Mohammed had been deposed and was safe in India, that therefore Shah Soojah sat safely on his throne. The announcement had hardly been made that 'Afghanistan was as tranquil as Wales' when the first dull murmur of the rising torrent was heard. 'You may take Candahar and Ghuzni,' the Khan of Khelat had warned us at the very outset of the war : 'you may even take Cabul, but you cannot conquer the snows ; and when they fall, you will be able neither to maintain your army nor to withdraw it.' 'When your military difficulties are over your real difficulties will begin,' was the warning of a greater than the Khan of Khelat, and of one who might have claimed a hearing even from the President of the Board of Control and the Governor-General—the Duke of Wellington. In similar tones of warning had spoken all the most high-minded and the best-informed of our Indian administrators—Lord Wellesley, Mountstuart Elphinstone, Lord William Bentinck, and Sir Charles Metcalfe ; in similar tones spoke the Council of the Governor-General, when, at last, they heard the secret which had been carefully kept from them by their chief ; in similar tones the Court of Directors at home ; but the warning fell upon deaf, because upon unwilling, ears.

The expenses of the occupation were becoming unbearable, and yet everybody felt that it would be dishonourable to leave the puppet whom we had crowned to his certain fate, and Afghanistan to certain anarchy. So we lingered on a little longer and curtailed our expenses, by diminishing the subsidies hitherto paid to the wild tribes who held the gloomy passes which frowned between us and safety. Instantly they returned to their immemorial custom of plundering and slaying all passers by, and, in a moment, we were cut off from India. The river was now running level with its banks and was about to overwhelm us. But still Macnaghten, the Resident at the puppet's court, and still Elphinstone, the general in command of the troops, refused to take

warning. The English troops who ought to have been in the citadel were quartered in ill-constructed cantonments, which lay at a distance from the city and were completely commanded by the surrounding mountains. The military stores were in a small fort at a distance from both cantonments and citadel. The royal treasure was in a similar fort in the middle of the city, as though to invite attack; and within the Bala Hissar, or citadel, cowered the miserable monarch, making believe to stand upon his dignity and rule the country, while between him and his only possible protectors, the English army in its cantonments, seethed and surged the fanatical and infuriated mob of the most turbulent of cities. Worse than this, while in subordinate positions among our officers were some of the most intrepid spirits whom our Indian Empire has produced—Alexander Burnes, Vincent Eyre, William Broadfoot, Colin Mackenzie, George Lawrence, and Eldred Pottinger, any one of whom, had he been in command, might still have saved, or, at all events, would have deserved to save us—the chief authority was vested in General Elphinstone, a brave soldier, but a man wanting in decision, and now incapacitated doubly by old age and by a torturing disease; while, next to him, came Brigadier-General Shelton, a far abler man, but cross-grained and petulant, utterly impracticable, hardly on speaking terms with his chief, and yet unable to act either with him or without him. Everything and everybody, in fact, seemed to be exactly where they ought not to be, and this at the crisis of the fate of some 15,000 men!

Burnes, who was living in his own house in the city without an adequate guard, was the first victim. On November 2, an infuriated mob surrounded his house. He sent for aid to the cantonments. But no aid came, and, after a brave resistance, he was hacked to pieces in his own garden. The stores in the small fort were next attacked, and our troops stood looking on from their cantonments while the fort was stormed, and its contents, the only supplies which could keep them from starvation, were carried off. The arrival of Akbar Khan, the favourite son of Dost Mohammed, infused fresh spirit into the Afghans, while the want of energy and spirit shown by our chiefs spread paralysis among the English troops. Once and again, they refused to obey the

word of command, and, once and again, they fled disgracefully from the field when victory seemed to be in their grasp. Starvation now began to stare them in the face. And there was nothing for it but to make the best terms they could for the evacuation of the country with their relentless foe. The game was in the hands of Akbar Khan ; and if the wolf was ever merciful to the lamb, then the Feringhis might hope for forbearance from the infuriated Ghilzais.

In the struggle for life, Macnaghten, while he was negotiating with some of the Sirdars, was induced by the wily Akbar Khan to enter privately into other and inconsistent negotiations with him. It was a trap which was intended to demonstrate to the assembled Sirdars the faithlessness of the English, and it was successful. Macnaghten was lured to a conference, and, in the struggle which ensued, was shot dead by Akbar Khan. His head was cut off, and his body paraded through the market of Cabul, while some 5,000 soldiers lingered within striking distance, not daring to raise a finger in his defence. There was more delay, more negotiations, more appeals for mercy. 'In friendship,' pleaded the suppliants, 'kindness and consideration are necessary, not overpowering the weak with sufferings.' It had come then to this ! A younger generation of Englishmen may need to be reminded that the weak were the English, and that the friendship appealed to was the friendship of the people whose country we had gratuitously invaded, and whose ruler we had deliberately dethroned. In vain did Eldred Pottinger dwell on the faithlessness of the enemy and on the succours that might yet be hoped for from Jellalabad. In vain did he passionately appeal to the generals to allow their men to make one effort more to cut their way through the army, and die, if die they must, a soldier's death. The hope of life was stronger than any of his arguments ; and, at last, on December 24, the final agreement for the evacuation of the country was signed. All the guns but six, and all the remaining treasure, were to be given up ; Dost Mohammed was to be restored ; Shah Soojah was to make away with himself whither and how he liked ; Nott was to retire from Candahar and Sale from Jellalabad. On these terms the retreating army was to be supplied with provisions and to receive a safe-conduct as far as Jellalabad.

It was several days before the treaty was ratified. Snow—the snow of which the Khan of Khelat had warned us—began to fall ; and on January 6, 4,500 fighting men, and some 12,000 camp-followers, including many women and children, defiled out of the cantonments. As the last of these left the camp—and unfortunately it was not till late in the evening that they did so—the infuriated and triumphant Afghans rushed in and set fire to the abandoned tents, while the retreating army wound slowly on towards the fearful gorge of the Khurd Cabul. The snow lay thick upon the ground ; and upon the snow, without food or fuel or shelter of any kind, there bivouacked for two nights in succession, in that pitiless climate, the motley and ill-fated host composed of dusky troops drawn from the sun-scorched plains of India, of Englishmen and Englishwomen and babes at the breast. The camp-followers, who brought up the rear of our army, had been the first to feel the attacks of the pursuing Ghilzais ; but when, on the third day, the foremost columns began to enter the fatal defile, they too fell fast and thick beneath the fire of an enemy whom they could feel and hear, but could not see. Every rock concealed an Afghan marksman, and every one who lagged behind or who dropped exhausted on the road was immediately hacked to pieces by Afghan knives. Agreement after agreement was made with Akbar Khan, who hung like a bird of evil omen on our skirts, and concession after concession was wrung from us. First, the subordinate officers, who might have done most to sustain the shrinking spirits of the men and, perhaps, might have saved them altogether—Lawrence, Mackenzie, and Pottinger—were given up as hostages ; next came the women and children ; and, last of all, those whom we could best spare, the officers in command—Elphinstone and Shelton.

Lured by the scent of human carnage, and drunk with the blood which they had already gorged, the Ghilzai vultures were not likely, in deference to any stipulations made with Akbar Khan, to spare the prey that was in their power ; and Akbar himself, who might, perhaps, have done something to restrain their fury, was already off with his precious burden of English ladies and generals towards the Hindu Kush. The retreat had long since become a rout, and the army a rabble. The scant supply of food was gone, and now the



ammunition began to fail also. The last desperate stand was made at Gundamuck, a name of ill-omen, not wiped out by the treaty which, twenty-seven years later, has been called after it; and on January 15, there was espied from the ramparts of Jellalabad, riding on a jaded pony, which itself seemed but half alive, a single man, half dead with agony of mind and body, exhausted by want of food, by loss of blood, and by fatigue—the one solitary survivor of the 15,000 men who had left Cabul ten days before. Never, surely, in the whole course of history has wrong-doing been more terribly and more deservedly avenged. The one consolation—if indeed it can now be called a consolation—was that we had learned a lesson which we could never need to be taught again.

The evil genius of Lord Auckland, who retired, broken-down, to England, seemed to rest, for the time, even on the energy and courage of his successor. Lord Ellenborough was a man of great ability, and no mean orator. But his genius was erratic and his despatches were often merely grandiose. He was the victim of his own itching ears; and his judgment, his candour, and his caution were often sacrificed to the turn of a sentence, or the rhythm of a peroration. He was always in extremes; and after a chivalrous proclamation, in which by candidly avowing our mistakes and wrong-doings, and setting forth the principles of our policy for the future, he had evoked a warm response from one end of India to the other, he straightway turned the admiration he had excited into disgust and indignation, by the order, again and again repeated, to Pollock and Nott at once to withdraw from Afghanistan, leaving the prisoners—our brave officers and their helpless wives and children—to their fate! But the passive resistance, and ingenious inability of Nott and Pollock to do what they were bidden, put off the evil day, and, at last, brought them the famous permission to 'retire' from Jellalabad and Candahar, should they think it advisable, 'by way of Cabul!' The permission was greedily seized by the generals; the capital was occupied by the army of vengeance, and, thanks to the generous exertions of our officers, less summary punishment was inflicted on the inhabitants than might have been expected from the excited feelings of our soldiery. The Bala Hissar was blown up; the great bazaar in which Mac-

naghten's body had been exposed to insult was destroyed, together with the adjacent mosque ; the shops of the possibly guilty Afghans, and certainly innocent Hindus, were given up to loot ; the prisoners who had been sent off to a living death in Turkestan returned, as by a series of miracles, from the heights of the Hindu Kush, and, literally, dropped into our hands ; and, finally, the sandal-wood gates, as they were then believed to be, of Somnath, were brought back in triumph from Ghuzni ; while the bewildered natives of India were congratulated by the Governor-General—the Mohammedans on the recapture by Christians of what a Mohammedan conqueror had taken away—and the Hindus on the restoration to a temple which had long ceased even to be remembered, of a trophy which was destined to find a fit resting-place at last, not in the restored temple of Somnath, but in the armoury of the Government fort at Agra ! This proclamation was greeted with an outburst of derision both in England and in India : and so, according to approved precedents, the most prolonged tragedy through which the Indian Government had ever passed ended in a tragi-comedy, if not in a downright farce.

## CHAPTER VII.

MAGISTRATE OF DELHI; AND FIRST SIKH WAR. 1842-1846.

AFTER the usual roughing of the Overland Route and the formation of several shipboard friendships, one of which, unlike most shipboard friendships—that with Seton-Karr—proved lasting, John Lawrence and his wife arrived at Bombay on November 14, 1842. It was a place new to him as to her; and after ten days of sight-seeing in that bustling Babel of races and languages, finding that a war had broken out in Bundelcund, the direct route to the North-West Provinces, they determined to take the much longer and more difficult route through the then little-known Central Provinces to Allahabad. It was a journey adventurous for a man, but doubly adventurous for a woman, whose first experience of India had been a violent attack of cholera, from which, under her husband's careful nursing, she was just recovering.

It was seldom during their wild journey that they came even upon a traveller's bungalow. Having only one servant, they had to do almost everything for themselves. The wiry collector, in addition to keeping his forty bearers in order—a task for which his early life at Paniput had well qualified him—had often, himself, to act the part of purveyor and of cook; in other words, he had to find and to cook the lamb, the goat, or the pair of fowls which was to keep them alive; and, as he used to relate, many were the shifts and the turns to which he had recourse to conceal the disagreeable preparations for their rough-and-ready meal from his young and tender-hearted wife.

On the last day of the year they arrived at Nagpore, much to the astonishment of the Englishmen whom they found

there. And here more serious troubles came upon John Lawrence, for every one told him that his chance of obtaining employment was very slight. The 'army of vengeance' troops had just returned from Afghanistan, and a brilliant, but, under the circumstances, a very ill-timed and childish pageant had been elaborated by Lord Ellenborough for their reception at Ferozepore, then our chief station on the Sikh frontier.

There was no one in India who did not rejoice that we were quit of Afghanistan—the scene of our success and of our shame—on almost any terms. A feeling of mixed excitement and depression pervaded the country. There was plenty to be done, but there were too many hands to do it. Every one seemed to be out of work, and John Lawrence wrote, in some anxiety, from Nagpore to report his arrival to the Lieutenant-Governor of the North-West Provinces. He wrote privately, at the same time, to his immediate superior and friend, Robert Hamilton, Commissioner of Agra, begging him to press his claims for an appointment. Meanwhile, he pushed on to Allahabad, where he was hospitably entertained by Frederick Currie, who was, in after years, to be brought into such close contact with him in high official posts.

At Cawnpore, he spent a month in the house of Richard, the youngest of the Lawrence brotherhood, who was just then employed in raising troops there. It was a pleasant breathing-space before the more public and responsible portion of his life began. But, anxious about the future, and eager to be at work again, he chafed at the want of employment. He had already purchased what was, in his eyes, the first necessity of life—a pair of horses—and now he furnished himself with what was only less necessary—a second pair!—and then, after buying a buggy, a stock of tents, and stores of various kinds, and engaging servants for the future housekeeping, he started forth again, like the patriarch of old, with his long caravan of followers, not knowing which way he was to go, or where he should find rest, or work.

It was his wife's first experience of camp life, and very enjoyable she found it. The usual plan was to send the tents in advance some ten or twelve miles, and then to drive that distance in the buggy, arriving in time for breakfast; and

then they would spend the heat of the day in reading, writing, and conversation. At Agra, their tents were pitched just outside the gardens of the Taj Mehal, so that they had every opportunity of observing that matchless building—‘the delight and the despair’ of the architects of the world, in the early morning, in the full blaze of the midday sun, and by the softer light of the moon. This visit was especially recalled to the mind of one at least of the party when, more than twenty years afterwards, they were there, once again, in all the pomp and splendour of the Viceregal court. ‘Great as was then,’ writes Lady Lawrence, ‘my joy and thankful pride in my husband, it could not be greater than the delight of those early days, when the world seemed all before us, and the reality of life had yet hardly touched me, and I lived only in the present happiness.’ On one of their easy marches thence a striking domestic incident occurred. John Lawrence and his wife were driving, one day, towards their tents, when they saw a large encampment near the road, from which, to their indescribable surprise and delight emerged their brother George, who had just returned from his long captivity in Afghanistan, and was still dressed as an Afghan.

On parting with his brother, George asked him casually whither he was going. ‘To Meerut,’ replied John. ‘Why are you going to a place where you are not known?’ rejoined his brother. ‘Go to Delhi, where you are known: you are sure to get work there.’ The advice was taken, and while he was on his way thither he heard, to his delight, that, on the Commissioner of Agra’s recommendation, he had been appointed to the post of Civil and Sessions Judge at Delhi, though only for the period of one month. Thus John Lawrence found himself beginning work, once more, at the scene of his earliest Indian labours. And it is not to be wondered at, looking at the important influence which this return on his own footsteps had on the whole of his subsequent career, and considering also what a career it was, that I have found that more than one person has been anxious to claim a share of the credit of sending him back there. In any case, years afterwards John Lawrence wrote to Hamilton: ‘Your sending me to Delhi in 1843 was the making of me, and I can never forget it.’ And those cynical people who are ready to think that gratitude may be best

defined as 'a lively anticipation of favours to come' may be interested to know that such, at all events, was not John Lawrence's gratitude; for, years afterwards again, when the Chief Commissioner of the Punjab had returned to England, and had become a member of the Indian Council, he wrote to Sir Robert Hamilton in warm recollection of this long bygone service, and offered him his first nomination for his son. 'It is a great trait in his character,' says Sir Robert; and few will deny that it was so.

There were no more easy marches now. John Lawrence and his wife hurried on to Delhi, and, during their month's stay there, were hospitably entertained by Thomas Metcalfe, the Commissioner, brother-in-law to George Lawrence, and an old friend of John, who, eight years before, had assisted him in bringing to justice the murderers of William Fraser, his predecessor in his high office. John Lawrence was delighted to be at work again in the place which he knew and loved so well; and, by the end of the month, he received another acting appointment in the Delhi district, not far from the scene of his old labours at Paniput. His headquarters were to be at Kurnal, which he had known before only as a large military cantonment; and the prospect of settling down quietly, even for the short period of six months, was pleasant enough.

But this was not to be just yet, for disturbances had broken out in the neighbouring state of Khytul. Its Raja having died without an heir, the English Government found it convenient to declare that the territory had lapsed to them. But the retainers of the palace, thinking, as well they might, that they had at least as good a right to the palace spoils as the English, stimulated the native troops to resist the transfer, and attacked and overpowered the small force which was sent to take it over. The ungrateful duty of suppressing this disturbance fell upon Henry Lawrence, who after his exhausting labours, under Mackeson, at Peshawur in pushing on supplies for Pollock's army of retribution, had recently come back to civil work at Umballa. He was opposed, on principle, to the annexation of native states. The work therefore was little to his liking, but he had no choice in the matter. He hurried over to Kurnal for reinforcements, which were supplied by his brother John

in conjunction with the military authorities, and John, delighted to see his brother, and perhaps also—like David, as Eliab thought—still more delighted to see a little fighting, accompanied the force to the scene of action. The resistance of the enemy was trifling enough, but it was a work of more difficulty to keep order among the British troops, some of whom actually plundered the treasures which they had been sent to guard.

It need hardly be added that Henry Lawrence took good care to bring the offenders to justice, and then, with all the energy of his nature, he set to work to reorganise the administration and settle the revenue of the little state. John Lawrence, meanwhile, returned to Kurnal, and here a domestic event of importance occurred, for on June 10, 1843, at the very hottest season, his eldest child, Kate, was born. John's office was in his own house, a privilege rare enough in Indian official life; and his only complaint was that, owing to the epidemic which was raging in the surrounding district, he could get nobody to do any work.

In October, when the court of the Governor-General broke up from Simla, and began to move towards Calcutta, John Lawrence's house, being the only inhabited one in the cantonment, was the halting-place of many high officials, with a sprinkling of old friends among them; and on November 6, his brother Henry and his wife arrived on their way to Nepal. Here was another happy family meeting. It was the first time that the wives had met since they had played together as young girls in the north of Ireland, and each had now the satisfaction of judging for herself of the choice the other had made and of witnessing the help, the sympathy, and the happiness which each gave and received in so abundant a measure. They passed some days together in the one inhabited house, 'surrounded,' says Mrs. Henry Lawrence, 'by long lines of barracks, hospitals, and stables, flagstaff, racquet-court, church, bungalows, gardens, out-offices, all empty, all looking as if a plague had devastated the station in a night.' \*

A plague had devastated the station, not in a night, but in a year, or rather series of years. Kurnal, when John Lawrence had last known it, had been one of the largest,

\* *Life of Sir Henry Lawrence*, vol. i. p. 442.

healthiest, and most popular of the cantonments in India. Its local advantages were great for such a purpose ; for the country was open and suitable for the evolutions of troops ; the soil was light and sandy, and therefore conducive to health ; there was plenty of grass and water ; lastly, the two great roads from Delhi and Meerut converge there, and, standing as the place did on the direct highway between the Punjab and Hindustan, it had been, as I have already pointed out, the historic battle-field of India. What then had turned it into such a city of the dead ? It was not that the general condition of the people had deteriorated. On the contrary, there were signs of improvement everywhere. In 1833-35, when John Lawrence had been stationed there before, what between the oppressive assessments of previous years and the famine, the people had been at their lowest ebb, and many villages had been completely broken up. But he had not left till he had seen, and had, in great measure, caused, the turn of the tide. He had brought order out of anarchy, had postponed the payment of the land-tax, and had set on foot its permanent reduction, a work which others had, afterwards, been able satisfactorily to complete. What then was the cause of the epidemic and of the distress which it had brought in its train ? Fretting at the want of work, and finding that some fifty per cent. of the troops were struck down by fever, and that the rest were so enfeebled that 'there was not a man of them who could carry his arms or march a stage,' while the natives in the adjoining villages were suffering equally, he spent his spare time in an elaborate inquiry into the cause of the epidemic and its possible remedies. The results he embodied in a valuable paper, the first of the kind in my possession, which he put together at Delhi in the following spring.

The epidemic he traced, not, as so many high authorities have since done, to canal irrigation in itself, thus, rightly or wrongly, discouraging the chief safeguard against famine, and the cheapest means of intercommunication, but rather to the neglect of proper precautions in carrying out that irrigation, to the masses of herbage and brushwood which had been allowed to grow on the canal banks, and to the increased cultivation of rice. The inhabitants of that part



of India, it should be remembered, unlike the natives of Bengal, had, till lately, been accustomed to live, not on rice, but on wheat, barley, and pulses of various kinds. These last crops need comparatively little water, whereas rice, to do well, needs to be incessantly flooded. 'Rice, in fact, grows only in a marsh, and in the last few years it had come to be cultivated literally up to the bungalows.' The cantonment was quite surrounded on two sides by rice-fields. Here was one fertile source of mischief, and the neglect, on the part of the military authorities, which allowed this had also allowed vast masses of refuse to accumulate. 'The only scavengers were the kites and vultures, the pariah dogs and pigs.' The bodies of animals and even of men might be seen lying about where they had died, without even a handful of earth thrown over them, nuisances which John Lawrence used to ferret out for himself in his early rides, and order his own police to remove. The practical remedies which he suggested for this state of things were the absolute prohibition of rice cultivation within four miles of the cantonments, the regulation of the height of the water in the canals, and the careful removal of herbage from their banks, so that no slimy ground or putrid vegetation might be exposed to the burning rays of the sun; an improved system of drainage; a strict system of sanitary police; the removal of the bazaars to a distance from all barracks, bungalows, and hospitals, and their reconstruction with wide wind-swept passages or streets.

In November, 1843, the 'acting' appointment at Kurnal came to an end, and John Lawrence travelled back, bag and baggage, over the well-known ground, to take up another temporary appointment at Delhi. It was not till towards the end of the following year that the 'substantive' post became vacant, and then, at last, the right man was found in the right place, and John Lawrence became, in his own right, Magistrate and Collector of the two districts of Delhi and Paniput. During these last two years, his salary had been less than half of that which he had received before he left India on furlough; and it must have been difficult enough for a man who was so hospitable and so liberal, to maintain his wife, his child, his servants, and his two pairs of horses on so narrow an income. He had now just

attained, in rank and emoluments, to the position he had held before he left India, invalided ; and in the general depression which prevailed in India as the result of the Afghan war, and that other war which followed, and, if possible, outstripped it in iniquity—the war with the Ameers of Scinde—his contemporaries found themselves in much the same deadlock as he did. In November, 1844, a second daughter, Emily, was born, just at the time when her father's means became more adequate to his needs and his deserts.

Of the work done by him during the next two years as Magistrate and Collector of Delhi there is, unfortunately, little to tell ; though, to judge by what I have been told was in after years his usual exordium in telling a story—‘when I was Collector at Delhi’—there must have been not a little that would have been well worth the telling, if only it had been preserved. But from what I have been able to record of his work during his earlier sojourn there, we may, doubtless, infer the general character of the later. There were the same general elements of turbulence, disaffection, and difficulty : the corrupt palace of the effete Mogul, who was now some ten years nearer to his total dissolution ; the swashbucklers who infested his court ; the large criminal class and the mongrel multitude of the historic capital. Sir Robert Montgomery recollects the reputation which John Lawrence acquired, and which reached even to Allaha-bad, by the masterly manœuvring of a small body of police with whom he descended on a nest of gamblers and cut-throats, ‘budmashes’ of every description, and took them all prisoners, without shedding a drop of blood, and without creating even so much as a disturbance.

The state of the regions beyond the Sutlej, seething with a brave and turbulent soldiery, who, for some years past—ever since, in fact, the strong hand of Runjeet Sing, the lion of the Punjab, had been withdrawn—had set their own government at defiance, and might, it was believed, at any moment burst upon British India, seemed to call for the best soldier at our command to succeed Lord Ellenborough. He was found in the person of the veteran, who, as a subaltern, had received four wounds, had had four horses shot under him, and had won nine medals in the Peninsula ; who, as a Lieutenant-Colonel, had turned the tide in the

battle of Albuera—itself the turning-point of the Peninsular War ; had, afterwards, bled at Ligny, and was the special favourite of both Blucher and Wellington—the high-souled and chivalrous Sir Henry Hardinge. He had been enjoined, with more than usual solemnity, by the Court of Directors, to keep the peace, if peace were possible, and, with probably more than the usual sincerity of newly appointed Governors-General, he had pledged himself to do so. ‘A purer man,’ so Mr. Gladstone, the last surviving and the most brilliant member of the Cabinet in which he served, has recently remarked, ‘a more honourable man, and, great soldier as he was, a man less capable of being dazzled by military glory, never entered the councils of his sovereign.’ But events were too strong for him. He found that the preparations which had been made for the defence of the frontier by his battle-loving predecessor were inadequate to the daily increasing danger ; and with consummate skill, still hoping for peace but preparing for war, he managed, quite unobserved by the Indian public, within little more than a year after he had reached the country, to double the number of our troops on the threatened positions.

So true a soldier would not be content without a personal inspection of the frontier line. His road lay through Delhi, and on November 11, 1845, he met, for the first time, its Collector and Magistrate—the subject of this biography. A soldier born and bred, he was not likely to know much of civil matters ; but he was able, as the result showed, to appreciate, almost at a glance, the capacities, military and civil, latent and developed, of John Lawrence. Each, at first sight, was favourably impressed with the other—the Governor-General with the energy, the sagacity, and the knowledge of the Magistrate, who accompanied him in his rides over the ruined cities which surrounded the city of the living, and endeavoured to explain to him all the mysteries of irrigation and of revenue collection ; the Magistrate with the frankness and friendliness and military spirit of the Governor-General. ‘I went out,’ writes John to his brother Henry, in one of the earliest of his letters which has come into my hands, ‘on the 11th to meet the Governor-General. He came in yesterday. I like him much ; he is amiable

and considerate, but does not give me any idea of being a man of ability. Currie and Benson are the only men of standing about him: the rest are mere logs. Everything breathes a pacific air; I do not think there will be a war. He leaves here on the 10th, and goes straight to Umballa. He does not seem to me to be much at home on civil matters, or to interest himself on such subjects, but he is wide awake in all military affairs.'

'Everything seems pacific; I do not think there will be a war.' This reads oddly enough, when we remember that it was on the very day (November 17) on which it was written that the Durbar at Lahore determined to invade British India; that it was nothing but the scruples of the astrologers, who said that the stars were not favourable, which delayed operations for a single day; that, on the 11th of the following month, the Sikh army began to cross the Sutlej, and that, by the 15th, the whole strength of the famous Khalsa commonwealth—60,000 soldiers, 40,000 camp followers, and 150 heavy guns—were safely landed in British territory. We may well ask, 'How could John Lawrence himself, how could the Governor-General, how could the Commander-in-Chief, and the most experienced officers on the frontier—Littler, Broadfoot, Wheeler, and others—all agree that no immediate danger was to be apprehended? They thought, indeed, that bands of Akalis—fanatics, akin to the Muslim Ghazis—might rush on their deaths by haphazard incursions. But not one of them feared the deliberate and immediate invasion of an army. The fact is, that the Sikh Durbar had given secret orders for the invasion, not so much with any hope of conquering British India, as of securing their own safety. They had reason to fear that their tumultuary army, the Prætorian Guard of Lahore, would turn and rend them. Would it not be well to give it vent elsewhere? If the Sikh army were destroyed in the invasion of India, the Sirdars might still hope for consideration from the British. If it were successful, they would step quietly in for a share of the spoil. Such reckless and cruel policy it would have been difficult for any one outside the Durbar itself to have predicted. 'No one can tell,' as John Lawrence pertinently remarks in one of his letters, 'what fools will do.' But it is material also to observe in

defence of the British authorities, that they had made preparations even for what they did not expect; and hardly had the Sikhs entered British territory, when an army, adequately equipped for anything that seemed to be within the range of possibility, advanced to meet them.

Declining the conflict gallantly offered them by Sir John Littler at Ferozepore, the Sikhs, who outnumbered him as six to one, pushed on in two divisions—one to Moodki and the other to Ferozeshuhr—and, on December 18 and 21, followed two pitched battles against foes such as, happily, we had never had to face before in India. The interest attaching to the conflict resembles that which belongs to the war between Rome and Pyrrhus, when, for the first time, the Roman legion met the Macedonian phalanx, and a national militia found themselves pitted against a highly trained and veteran army of mercenaries. In the Sutlej campaign now opening, the Sikh, trained by French and Italian officers, and inspired by religious as well as by national enthusiasm, crossed swords, for the first time, with the Bengal Sepoy, who ate the Company's salt, and fought for us simply because he did so. And if our army had consisted of Sepoys only, the result would certainly not have been in favour of the Sepoys. It needed all the reckless valour of the grand old Commander-in-Chief, Sir Hugh Gough; all the chivalrous devotion of the Governor-General, who, like Scipio Africanus of old, cheerfully waived his pre-eminence and consented to take the second place, to restore the waning fortunes of the day. It needed all that the imbecility, the cowardice, and even the treachery of the Sikh commanders, Lal and Tej Sing, could do, to compel their dare-devil soldiers to know when they were beaten, and to bend before the storm.

But the battle of Moodki was only the prelude to a greater. Three days later, the real struggle took place at Ferozeshuhr. The Sikh army, 33,000 strong, had entrenched itself in a formidable position, defended by a hundred heavy guns. It was not till nearly four in the afternoon of the shortest day in the year that Sir Hugh Gough, with characteristic recklessness, gave the order to storm their entrenchments! Again and again, our battalions charged right up to the muzzles of the enemy's guns; and, again and again, they

were driven back, with heavy loss, by the Sikh infantry, who stood unmoved to meet them. It was an experience new for us in Indian warfare, and drove us, for the first time, to respect our foes. As night closed, our troops found themselves half outside and half within the enemy's position, unable either to advance or retreat. Regiments were mixed up with regiments, and officers with men, in the wildest confusion. The enemy's camp was on fire in several places, and was enlivened by frequent explosions; but their heavy guns still kept playing on our men as they lay exhausted on the frozen ground not three hundred yards off. What the Governor-General did during this 'night of terrors,' as it was justly called, throwing himself down to rest, now by the side of one set of disheartened men, now of another, cheering them up for the morrow's work, and, anon, leading them himself through the darkness in a desperate charge upon 'Futteh Jung,' the monster gun which was dealing death upon our ranks, and triumphantly spiking it,\* reads like the record of some Homeric chieftain, or of an Alexander, a Hannibal, or a Cæsar come to life again. Well might the veteran of the Peninsular War say that he had 'never known a night so extraordinary as this;' and well too, when the morning dawned, might he exclaim, in the words of Pyrrhus, whose romantic conflict with Rome this seemed likely now to resemble in more ways than one, 'Another such victory and we are undone!'

Happily for our Indian Empire, the treachery of Lal Sing on the following day was still more pronounced, and the victory which crowned our efforts was much more decisive. The enemy's camp was taken; their army was put to flight; a new army which came up under Tej Sing from Ferozepore and had not yet drawn a sword, hesitated, for some inscrutable reason, to attack our worn-out troops, who had not tasted food for thirty-six hours and had fired away almost their last round of ammunition; and, by the evening, the whole Sikh force was in full retreat.

Never, except at the very crisis of the Mutiny, was India in greater danger than during these two days and this night of terror. It was a Cadmean victory that we had won;

\* See the graphic description of the battle in Cunningham's admirable *History of the Sikhs*, pp. 301-3.

and a Cadmean victory it might have remained, had not Sir Henry Hardinge, who had lost a seventh of his army, had seen ten out of his twelve *aides-de-camp* wounded or killed at his side, and was mourning the loss, among many others equally distinguished in recent Indian history, of D'Arcy Todd and Broadfoot, bethought him of the strenuous and energetic magistrate with whom he had so lately spent those interesting days at Delhi. It was now, at the very crisis of the struggle, that the Governor-General, unable to follow up his victory from the want of ammunition, of siege guns, and of provisions, and unable to fall back towards his base, because to do so would invite another invasion of the still unbroken Sikh army, wrote, in his own handwriting, and in hot haste, as its contents show, a pressing note to the Collector and Magistrate of Delhi to come to his aid. The opportunity had thus at length come to the man, and the man was not wanting to the opportunity. He had put his own foot into the stirrup, and it was not likely now that he would fail to leap into the saddle.

The neighbourhood of Delhi had been already much drained by the preparations for the war, by the marching and countermarching of troops, and, it must be added, by the passing and repassing, even in years of peace, of the huge camps of the Governor-General or the Commander-in-Chief, as they moved along the great thoroughfare towards the North-West. John Lawrence had not been slow to point out the abuses to which the purveyance system was liable, and now, curiously enough, he had to apply that system himself on the most extensive and unprecedented scale. His sensitiveness to right and wrong made him not less, but infinitely more, capable for the task that was imposed upon him. He managed, partly by personal influence, partly by promises of adequate pay, which he took care should reach the hands of the right persons, to raise in that thinly peopled country, within a very short space of time, the extraordinary number of 4,000 carts, each of which, as he arranged, was to be driven by its owner; and as a result of his admirable arrangements hardly any of the drivers deserted.

As soon as the great magazine of Delhi, in which men worked day and night moulding bullets and turning out

every instrument of death, had done its part, John Lawrence despatched the whole train on its journey of two hundred miles along the great northern road, in time to take a share—the lion's share—in the crowning victory of Sobraon. Indeed, without his exertions, Sobraon would have been impossible, or, at all events, indefinitely postponed. The Sikhs, encouraged by our inability to follow up our success at Ferozeshuhr, and putting it down to cowardice, had again crossed the Sutlej under Runjore Sing, had inflicted a severe reverse on Sir Harry Smith at Buddowal, and had been defeated by him in turn, but certainly not disgraced, on January 28, at Aliwal.

On February 9, the long train of heavy guns dragged by stately elephants, of ammunition, of treasure and supplies of every kind, reached the camp from Delhi. The spirits of officers and men rose at the sight, and, on the following day, the decisive battle was fought. The Sikh troops, basely betrayed by their leaders, who had come—so it was said, and not without some appearance of truth—to a secret understanding with us, fought like heroes. One old chief, whose name should be recorded—Sham Sing—‘among the faithless faithful only found,’ clothed in white garments, and devoting himself to death, like Decius of old, called on those around him to strike for God and the Guru, and, dealing death everywhere around him, rushed manfully upon his own. The Sikhs were, once more, in a position of their own choice, and, once more, the impetuous Commander-in-Chief, in defiance of the rules of war, charged with splendid gallan’ry the guns of the enemy in front. It was in this one respect the battle of Ferozeshuhr over again. But, taught by experience, Sir Hugh Gough began it at seven in the morning instead of at four in the afternoon, and by eleven A.M. the fighting was over. The Sikhs had fought with a broad and swollen river in their rear, and many hundreds whom the cannon or the sword would have spared, were swept away in its waters.

The battle of Sobraon ended the campaign and the war. The Punjab was prostrate at Lord Hardinge's feet, and the unprovoked attack of the Khalsa on our territories gave him an unquestioned right to annex the whole. But there were difficulties in the way. The advanced season; the



exhaustion of our army, which now contained barely 3,000 European troops ; the probable expense of the administration of so poor and so vast a country ; the salutary dislike of the Company and its best servants to all unnecessary extension of territory ; the advantage of having a brave and partially civilised race between ourselves and the more ferocious and untameable tribes of Afghanistan, wars with whom would bring us neither gain nor glory ;—all these were arguments against annexation, and Sir Henry Hardinge, with that prudence and that moderation which were habitual to him, determined to be content with a part when he might have clutched at the whole, and to give the Sikhs another chance—a *bona fide* chance—of maintaining their independence. On the outbreak of the war he had formally proclaimed the annexation of the protected Sikh domain on our side of the Sutlej, and he now determined to cripple the power of the Khalsa for further aggression by confiscating the Jullundur Doab—together with the adjacent hill tracts on the other side of the Beas, Kangra, Nurpore, and Nadoun. The expenses of the war were, according to invariable custom, to fall also upon the vanquished. But these the Durbar, alike profligate and insolvent, professed its inability to pay, and in lieu thereof, the Governor-General arranged to take over the highlands of Jummoo and that earthly paradise, the valley of Kashmere. But while the Punjab was independent it was impossible for us to keep a satisfactory hold of Jummoo. And, by a very questionable stroke of policy, which had been arranged beforehand, and which has brought woes innumerable on the unhappy Kashmiris ever since, we handed it over to the Dogra Rajpoot, Golab Sing, who paid us down at once in the hard cash which he had stolen from the Lahore Durbar. He was an unscrupulous man, but an able ruler, amenable to our influence, and would now be bound down by the only obligation he would be likely to recognise—his own self-interest—to aid us in checking any further ebullition of Khalsa fury.

But who was to rule the country which we had annexed and intended to keep within our grip—the Jullundur Doab ? Who but the sturdy Collector who had made his name to be a watchword for ability, order, economy, indefatigable work throughout the Delhi district, and who, it might be

confidently hoped, would be able to manage Rajpoots, Gudis, and Kashmiris in the highlands, as he had been already able to manage Jats, Ranghurs, and Goojurs below ? With two weak corps of native infantry and one battery of native artillery, he had preserved perfect order during these troublous times in the imperial city, while war was raging, and raging not always to our credit or our advantage, within our own territories, not two hundred miles away. He had ridden about the city during these three months of peril, amidst its turbulent populace, attended by his single orderly as though in time of profound peace. In anticipation of the annexation on which he had determined, Sir Henry Hardinge had written, some time before, to Thomason, the distinguished Lieutenant-Governor of the North-West Provinces, asking him to send up John Lawrence for a high executive appointment in the Cis-Sutlej states, which had been already annexed. Thomason, who was primarily responsible for the safety of his own provinces, thought that Lawrence could not be spared from Delhi at such a crisis, and sent up instead another officer whom he deemed to be 'well qualified' for the post. But the well-qualified officer was sent back without ceremony to the place whence he came, and the peremptory message, 'Send me up *John Lawrence*,' showed that the Governor-General was not to be trifled with ; that he had made up his mind ; and that John Lawrence, and no one else, was, as soon as the war was over, to be the ruler of the Jullundur Doab. And accordingly, on March 1, 1846, he was ordered to repair to Umritsur, the religious capital of the Sikhs, there to receive the Governor-General's instructions for the onerous and honourable post for which his merits, and his merits alone, had recommended him.

## CHAPTER VIII.

COMMISSIONER OF TRANS-SUTLEJ STATES. 1846.

THE point which we have now reached in the life of John Lawrence is that at which he emerges from comparatively private into public life ; from posts which, however important, were yet only subordinate, to one in which he stands on his own foundation ; from the care of populations which had long been subject to our rule, to that of a race who had never felt its stress and had just joined in the great, and, at one time almost successful, effort, to oust us from our hold of North-Western India. It was a great leap, which carried him, at the early age of thirty-four years, clear over the heads of all his contemporaries and of many also of his seniors, and roused feelings of natural jealousy in some of those whom he had distanced, which have hardly yet spent their force.

The Jullundur period is one of the busiest of John Lawrence's life, and it will be well to inquire first what were the geographical and historical conditions of the country over which he was called upon to preside. The Jullundur Doab lies between the rivers Sutlej and Beas, and is, for the most part, a rich champaign country inhabited by Jats, who hereabouts, as John Lawrence describes them, were ' a most industrious painstaking race, very quiet and orderly, who had cultivated every mile of waste ground, and were, apparently, very glad to submit to our rule.' The northern part of the Doab consists of ranges of low hills intersected by narrow valleys, and is inhabited by Rajpoot tribes, who, at that time, were split up into many sections and were living under their own chiefs. Besides the Doab proper, there is a vast mountain tract covering an area of some

13,000 square miles, and containing a population of 750,000 souls, which goes stretching away beneath the snowy range with its peaks of 16,000 feet in height, right up to the borders of Ladak in Chinese Tartary. This alpine country contains every variety of scenery, of climate, of soil, and of race, from the lordly Rajpoot down to the lowly Goojur and Jolaha, and is the birthplace of three of the great Punjab rivers—the Beas, the Ravi, and the Chenab. The town which has given to this region its chief historical celebrity, and which I shall presently have to describe in detail, is the famous fortress of Kangra. But the whole country bristled with little hill fortresses, which were strong by nature if not by art, and were generally held by independent chiefs whose subjects were remarkable for their courage and their high sense of honour. Would these hundred little fortresses yield to the newly appointed Commissioner, backed by an armed force, in the peaceful manner in which the walled village had yielded, some years before, to the importunity of the solitary Collector of Delhi?

John Lawrence lost no time in buckling down to his work. It was on March 1, 1846, that he received his appointment from the Governor-General at Umritsur, and by the 30th of the same month the Governor-General was paying him a return visit at Jullundur, where he had already got well on with the most important and most difficult task of the ruler of a newly annexed province, the settlement—of course, at present, only a summary settlement—of its revenue. He had hoped to complete the work of that particular portion of his province in the first week of April; but the incursion of a Sikh chief from the other side of the Beas, and the disturbed state of the country bordering on the hills, warned him to drop the pen, to take up the sword, and to move northwards to Hoshiarpore. During this first month he had been working alone in his new dominions. 'I have not yet been joined,' he says, 'by one of my assistants. I work from ten to twelve hours every day, and yet I daily leave much undone.' By April 10, two out of the four assistants who had been promised him had arrived.

Before the energy which John Lawrence threw into his work difficulties seemed to fly, and he had not been in the

Doab more than a month when, with that manly frankness and simplicity which marks him throughout his career, he told Frederick Currie, the Secretary to Government in the Foreign Department, exactly what he had done, what he had not done, and what he thought he would, one day, be able to do. That which, in other people, might be put down as self-assertion is in him a bare statement of fact, as far removed from affectation of modesty as it is from ostentation or display :—

As far as I am concerned as supervisor, I could easily manage double the extent of country. It is on the efficiency of the executive that the results must depend. Of five officers nominated under me, three have never joined, and the other two I have had with me but four days. With five men present, I could manage this country in first-rate style, hill and plain, even though everyone, with the exception of —, is wholly new to the duty. Mackeson may have a greater extent of territory (the Cis-Sutlej States) than I have, but recollect that two-thirds of his is an old country, which is, or ought to have been, long since settled. I only ask you to wait six months, and then contrast the civil management of the two charges. . . . After what I have said, I think you ought to give me Harry Lumsden, for he is a good linguist, and a steady fellow. If you send young civilians they cannot be of much use for the first year; however, do as you think best. I can only make the most of the instruments you put into my hands.

The petition thus made was duly complied with, and Harry Lumsden, whose good sword has done service since then in many a border fight, and who was for many years one of the most dashing of John Lawrence's 'wardens of the marches,' soon appeared. With him came also Lieutenant Edward Lake, of the Bengal Engineers, afterwards one of the most efficient soldier-politicals in the Punjab, and who was now entrusted with the revenue settlement of Narpore. 'I like Lake very well; he is a nice little fellow,' John writes to his brother Henry; 'but all your politicals look more to politics than to statistics and the internal economy of the country.' It is pleasant to think that four of John Lawrence's earliest assistants in the Jullundur Doab—Cust, Lumsden, Lake, and Hercules Scott, in spite of his stern rule and his insatiable appetite for work, or it may be, perhaps, because of them—proved his warm friends for life.

John Lawrence had hardly finished his work in the plains

when news reached him from the hills that the fort of Kote-Kangra had closed its gates, had repaired its defences, and that its determined leader, with a garrison of three hundred veteran Sikhs, had fired three cannon-shots upon the small force of Lieutenant Joseph Davy Cunningham, the accomplished and earnest historian of the Sikhs, and had declared that he would not surrender its keys unless the 'Lion of the Punjab,' Runjeet Sing himself, returned from the dead and demanded them of him.

The hill fortress which breathed this proud defiance could trace back its history, and that too no ignoble one, for two thousand years. 'At a time when our ancestors were unreclaimed savages, and the Empire of Rome was yet in its infancy, there was a Kutoch monarchy, as it was called, with an organised government at Kangra, and its rulers had, ever since that time, more or less swayed the destinies of the surrounding hill states. The fort stands on a precipitous and isolated rock four hundred feet high, and is connected with the main range of hills only by a narrow neck of land, twenty yards wide. This neck is defended by strong walls built up against the solid rock, which has been scarped for the purpose, and a winding passage through seven different gateways gives access to the fortress.

John Lawrence was alive to the emergency, and, on May 1, accompanied by Harry Lumsden, he started for the scene of action. On his way thither he received the submission of all the hill chiefs and the hearty support of a few of them, among whom were the Rajas of Mundi and Nadoun. He found, on his arrival, that the fort was still holding out, though blockaded by a corps of Native Infantry which had been sent up a month before to take peaceful possession of it. Early in the century, the redoubtable fortress had held out successfully against the Ghoorkas for a three years' siege, and if it should prove now able to resist the British for as many months as it had resisted the Ghoorkas years, John Lawrence feared that there would be a renewal of the war all along the hills. So he applied to Wheeler, the General in command of the Division, for some heavy guns, and bade Harry Lumsden fix upon the best route onward from the Beas, where all roads stopped. The sequel shall be told as nearly as possible in John Lawrence's own words :—

Additional native troops, with a pair of heavy guns, had, meantime, been slowly winding up to the point on the Beas which lay nearest to Kangra. Here the level country ended, and no such thing as a siege gun had ever yet been seen in the Kangra hills. There was no road, nothing beyond a narrow pathway. But Harry Lumsden had explored the proper route, and the engineers now set to work to construct a temporary road on which the guns could travel.

Within a week, the work was accomplished, and the guns conveyed a distance of some forty miles into our camp, which lay at the foot of the hill on which the fort was situated. In the evening, a deputation from the Sikh garrison came out of the fort to hear our terms. The members, three greybeards, were quiet and courteous, but determined. For several hours they remained talking over matters with Colonel Lawrence and myself. At last, as they rose to make their salaam, and were on the eve of departure, I suggested that they should stay and see the guns at break of day ascend the hill. They listened and agreed, but with a gesture which denoted incredulity. At four A.M. they were awakened by vociferous cheering. They started from their rough beds and rushed out, believing that it was a sally from the garrison. They were soon undeceived; for, a few moments later, there appeared a couple of large elephants slowly and majestically pulling an eighteen-pounder, tandem fashion, with a third pushing behind. In this manner, gun after gun wound its way along the narrow pathway, and, by the help of hundreds of Sepoys, safely rounded the sharp corners which seemed to make further progress impossible. The Sikh elders looked on with amazement, but said not a word. When the last gun had reached the plateau, they took their leave and returned to the fort. In an hour the white flag was raised. The garrison defiled out man by man, and, throwing down their arms, quietly took their way to the plains. Thus passed by what might have developed into a very serious affair.

While these military movements were going on and this bloodless victory over a redoubtable fortress was being achieved the administration of the district was not neglected for a single day. The police were distributed all over the country, courts were established in suitable places, and the summary settlement of the revenue prosecuted. While Cust was finishing the work which had been begun by his chief at Jullundur and Hoshiarpore, and Lake was settling the revenue of Nurpore, the Commissioner himself managed to do all the rest, Kangra, Hurripore, Nadoun, Spiti, and Kulu. He traversed hundreds of miles of country in the process, and before May 1, the beginning, that is, of the official year, exactly two months from the date of his appointment, and from our first occupation of the country, the whole operation was completed.

The personal intercourse which John Lawrence had had with natives in his earlier career now stood him in good stead. The reform which he was most bent on introducing—the substitution of a land-tax paid in money for one paid in kind—was a rude shock to native ideas ; for, from time immemorial, their ancestors had paid the state dues in grain. They would fain still have stood upon the old ways, and they came to John Lawrence, sometimes in large bodies, sometimes one by one, asking to be allowed to do as they had always done. The Commissioner, who was resolved to carry out his project—by persuasion if possible, but anyhow to carry it—explained to these rigid conservatives the advantages of the new system, and pointed out the abuses inseparably connected with the old one. The poverty of the remonstrants, if not their will, consented, and when the reform had once been introduced and its advantages perceived, there was no more wish to return to the old state of things. The middlemen and tax-farmers who preyed on the agricultural class were swept away for ever, and it was calculated that a relief of from fifteen to twenty per cent. had been made on each man's payments, while the total which found its way into the coffers of the state was as nearly as possible the same !

It will follow from what I have already said of the history of the hill country and its Rajas, that it would be of prime importance to effect a just and satisfactory settlement of their claims. This subject was at once taken in hand. The circumstances of each chief were carefully considered. All the fiefs found in their possession were maintained, while they were, at the same time, freed from the military service and the fiscal exactions which had been the cause of so much vexation under Sikh rule. Any rights of independent jurisdiction which were found to be in existence at the time of our occupation were confirmed ; but John Lawrence, acting on principles which will be often brought before us in his subsequent career, stoutly refused to restore any such exceptional privileges, if they had once lapsed.

Another evil more deeply rooted even than the payment of taxes in kind, and which prevailed, more or less, over the whole of India, was especially rife among the Rajpoot races of the North-West and the Jullundur Doab. The practice



of female infanticide, due, in other parts of the world, either to simple inhumanity or to poverty, is in this part of India the outcome, in the main, of family pride. The Rajpoot deigns not to give his daughter to a member of an inferior subdivision of caste to himself, for he himself would lose caste thereby; he dares not give her to a member of the same subdivision, because such connections are looked upon as incestuous. The difficulty, therefore, of procuring any eligible husband for his daughter; the ruinous expense connected, according to immemorial custom, with the celebration of the wedding, the suspicion with which an unmarried woman is apt to be regarded by the members of her family; and the ease with which, living in the jealous seclusion of his ancestral home, the father can get rid of an obnoxious addition to it;—all these causes combined to overpower the voice of parental affection. So wholesale was the destruction of female infant life that, when the attention of philanthropists was first directed to it, whole village communities were found to be without a single girl.

Nor was the practice confined to the Rajpoots. It was still more universal among the Bedis, who were a subdivision of the Khuttri caste and traced back their descent to the Guru Nanuk. They had never allowed a single female child to live, and when the Bedi of Oona, the head of the tribe—in fact, the spiritual head of the Sikh religion—was warned by John Lawrence that he must forbid infanticide throughout his jagheer, he replied, that, if the Sahib so willed it, he would never enter his harem again, and would influence, so far as he could rightly do so, others to do the same, but it was impossible for him to command his dependents to give up so treasured a custom. ‘You must do it or give up your lands,’ rejoined John, and the stiff-necked old Levite acquiesced in the lesser of two evils, and did give up—his lands.

Here is the earliest hint I have found in his papers of a danger which, if its meaning had been fully grasped by the authorities, might have done something towards averting or postponing the Indian Mutiny. ‘Government will get as many Rajpoots on the hills as it can want, either for regular or irregular corps. Thousands served in the Sikh army and would do so in ours. I do not think that they will object to go anywhere or do anything. In our regular corps these

men will be very valuable, as coming from a different part of the country and having different ideas and interests from our Oudh Sepoys. As it is now, our Sopoys are nearly all from Oudh and its vicinity, and the majority are Brahmins ; hence it is that, in any quarrel, they so readily combine. The Rajpoots here are a very fine people, and, having little to live on at home, they are glad to take service.'

In the occupations which I have described, the first three months of his Commissionership passed away. They were an epitome of the whole three years during which he was to hold the office, and they anticipated faithfully, on a small scale, the responsibilities of the Punjab Board and of the Chief Commissionership. They were months of hard work and rapid progress ; and, in the month of June, just when he might have hoped for some diminution of his twelve hours a day at his desk, he was taken ill with a violent attack of fever and ague, which drove him across the hills to recruit his strength at Simla, where his wife and family were then residing. His brother Henry had gone there before him to consult with the Governor-General on the affairs of the Punjab in general. But he, too, was worn out with his labours as resident at Lahore, and so the already overworked John was, after a few weeks' rest, requested by Lord Hardinge to take temporary charge of his brother's onerous post at the capital of the Punjab, while he was also to retain his own Jullundur Commissionership. How he managed to combine the two, and to make each, in some measure, assist the other, we shall gather from the ensuing chapter.

## CHAPTER IX.

ACTING-RESIDENT AT LAHORE. 1846-1848.

THE one-eyed adventurer of the Punjab who had built up, in his long career, an empire stretching from the point where the waters of the five rivers unite in one majestic stream to the eternal snows of the Himalayas, and, even beyond them again, to the Karakorum Range, and had torn away, from the Afghans on one side, and from the Great Mogul on the other, some of their fairest provinces, died in 1839. It happened to be the very year in which the young English civilian who was, one day, to rule the fabric that he had reared, and to reap vastly more from the plains of the Punjab than he had ever cared to sow, had himself seemed stricken to the death at Etawa, but, as though he was reserved for something great, had determined not to die. Throughout his career, Runjeet Sing had found, or had made, plenty of work for the fiery soldiers of the Khalsa commonwealth. But he had also held them in check with a strong hand, and, with one single exception—the year 1809, when he seemed disposed to claim the Jumna instead of the Sutlej as his south-eastern boundary—had managed to keep on the best of terms with his English neighbours. Not that he was in any way blind to the future. Unable either to read or write, he had the insight of genius, and, on one occasion, as the well-known story goes, he asked to be shown upon a map the parts of India occupied by the English. They were marked in red; and as his informant pointed successively to Madras, Bombay, Bengal, and the North-West Provinces, all overspread by that monotonous and usurping tint, he exclaimed, ‘It will soon all be red.’ He closed the map, however, with a submission to the inevitable which a good

Muslim might have envied, and with a strong practical determination that, if prudence could prevent it, the evil should come, not in his own, but in his successor's days.

The death of Runjeet was followed by six years of anarchy. The strong hand had been withdrawn, and there was the scramble for power and for life usual on the death of an Eastern monarch. One after the other, his chief relatives and ministers came to the front, but only that each—as in the days of Zimri, Tibni, and Omri, at Samaria, or of Galba, Otho, and Vitellius, at Rome—might, after a brief interval, lose power and life together. 'The people that followed Omri prevailed against them that followed Tibni, so Tibni died and Omri reigned.' Such is the pregnant sentence which sums up, better than pages of narrative could do, the fortunes of an Eastern dynasty, and often also of an Eastern people.

The priest who slew the slayer,  
And shall himself be slain,

is, perhaps, an equally pregnant description of the career of nine out of ten of those who aspire to rule such states as Lahore was then, or as Cabul was then and is still. At last, Duleep Sing, a son of Runjeet of tender years, and afterwards best known to fame as an English gentleman devoted to English sport on the most royal scale, had been named, by acclamation, successor to his father. But to proclaim a child the temporal ruler of the Khalsa commonwealth was, of course, to give the power for many years to come to his intriguing mother, the Rani Chunda, and to Lal Sing, her reigning paramour.

But Queen-mother, and boy King, and effeminate vizier, all found that they reigned rather than governed, and that too only on sufferance of the Khalsa army. It was an army turbulent, enthusiastic, fanatical, not knowing what it was to be beaten, composed of some eighty thousand men, trained by French and Italian generals, and supplied with the best artillery then known. Fearing the reckless fury of their soldiery, the Sirdars, as I have already shown, had, in self-defence, turned it against the English, and the four battles, fought within a space of two months, of the Sutlej campaign, if they proved to the Khalsa army that they had

at length found their betters, proved also to the English that the Sikh was very different to any foe they had hitherto met.

We began the campaign (says John Lawrence) as we have begun every campaign in India before and since, by despising our foes ; but we had hardly begun it before we learned to respect them, and to find that they were the bravest, the most determined, and the most formidable whom we had ever met in India. Hitherto, we had found in all our wars that we had only to close with our enemies, when, however overwhelming might be the odds against us, victory was certain. But, in this campaign, we found that the Sikhs not only stood to and died at their guns, but that their infantry, even after their guns had been lost, were undismayed and were still willing to contest the victory with us.

With such heroes—the heroes of Ferozeshuhr and Sobraon—Sir Henry Hardinge was willing to conclude peace on equitable conditions. Their independence was left to them ; the claims, such as they were, of the young Maharaja, of the Maharani, and of her lover, who had done so much to betray the cause of the commonwealth in the late war, were duly recognised, and, for the next nine months, an English Resident with ten thousand men at his back, was to be stationed, by the express request of the Punjab Government, at Lahore. His duties were of the most delicate kind. To curb the turbulence and cut down the numbers of the angry soldiery ; to help the Durbar to bring contentment out of discontent and order out of chaos ; to enable the Sikh Government by the end of the year to stand alone, and so to give the brave Sikh nation one more chance ;—such was the noble but the thankless task imposed upon him. That the chance was to be a *bonâ fide* one, that we were not waiting for a more convenient opportunity, and that our moderation was not merely dictated by our necessities, the strongest guarantee possible was given by the selection of the person who was to act as Resident. The best man in all India for the purpose, the chivalrous champion of native states, the protector of all who were down simply because they were so, the man who was as gentle and considerate as he was high-spirited and brave, was sent to Lahore by Sir Henry Hardinge to fill the post. And, if Troy could have been saved by any right hand, if any native state could have been rescued, in spite of itself, from that uniform red colour which was over-

spreading the peninsula from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin, it would have been by the right hand of Sir Henry Lawrence.

He set to work with a will at once. With the consent of the Durbar, he reduced the number of the soldiery, prevailed on some of them to re-enlist in our service, checked the desire for vengeance among those who had long suffered at the hands of their chiefs, and suppressed a disturbance at Lahore, known as the 'cow riot,' which might have grown into a formidable rising, at the cost of the life of one offender only. The questions connected with the slaughter of the cow, are, as I have shown in a previous chapter, a standing difficulty with our Indian administrators. 'As long,' said a native chief to Captain Eastwick, 'as you English kill the cow and cut its skin, so long there will be an impassable gulf between us;' and the Sikh, though he had thrown off much of his Hinduism, had retained all, perhaps more than all, of the Hindu reverence for the sacred animal.

But Henry Lawrence had been called away to Simla, before he had well begun his uphill work, and his mantle was to fall for the time upon the broad and willing back of his brother John. It is no disparagement at all to John Lawrence to say that the work of the Residency at Lahore was not naturally so congenial to him as it would have been to Henry. He had less sympathy with the native aristocracy by whom he was surrounded; partly, perhaps, because his view of them was too near and too clear; partly, also, I think, because he was less able than his brother to distinguish between those vices which were the natural and necessary result of the system in which they had been brought up, and those which might justly be looked upon as the result of individual depravity. In any case, he had a less enthusiastic belief in the possibility of a satisfactory reorganisation of the country under native rule. It is all the more to his credit, therefore, that he threw himself into his work as though he did thoroughly believe in it. What would have been a delicate and difficult operation enough in Henry's hands was, necessarily, even more so in his; for he was only 'acting' for his brother, and was bound in honour to carry out that brother's general views, even where they most differed from his own. Simla, moreover, was not so remote

but that Henry, on the strength of the information regularly supplied to him by his deputy, could have a voice in every important matter at Lahore as it turned up; and, conscious of the general difference of view between himself and his brother, he was, perhaps, more ready to detect opposition where none was either intended or existed. The disadvantages inherent in a system of divided responsibility were thus intensified; for Henry was near enough to criticise or overrule, not near enough to give present help in matters of immediate difficulty.

Day by day, John Lawrence was in the habit of receiving visits from the leading Sirdars—each one of them at deadly feud with the Regent and with most of his brother Sirdars, and each having selfish views of his own to serve; and from these interviews, using the powers of discernment which long intercourse with the natives in the Delhi district had given him, he managed to pick up a complete knowledge of all the twists and turns of the tortuous policy of the Lahore Government, and of all the conflicting interests which were represented in the Durbar. He met duplicity, not by counter-duplicity, but, as he invariably did, by the most absolute straightforwardness, and then, as ever in our dealings with the natives of India, it has been straightforwardness and not duplicity, statesmanship and not diplomacy, which, wherever it has been employed, has turned out to be the best policy in the end.

John Lawrence's letters to Government contain a gallery of portraits, drawn from the life, of every leading chief at Lahore; and space alone forbids my reproducing them here. When Lal Sing, who was the chief actor in all the court amours, and scandals, and intrigues, came to see John Lawrence, he found, to his extreme surprise, that his host knew as much about them as he did himself. It was the story of Benhadad and Elisha over again. 'The prophet that is in Israel,' said the servants of the puzzled King of Syria to their master, 'telleth the King of Israel the words that thou speakest in thy bedchamber.' In vain did the Regent question his servants as to the means by which John Lawrence knew everything that was going on. *Jan Larens sub janta* (knows everything) had been the spontaneous exclamation of the native of Paniput twelve years

before, and *Jan Larens sub jania* was the only explanation that could be offered now to their bewildered master by the servants of the palace at Lahore.

While there were chronic and ever-increasing causes for dissatisfaction in the Punjab proper, the iniquitous arrangement by which Kashmere and its ill-fated inhabitants were to be transferred without their consent, as though they were so many logs of wood, to Golab Sing, a Dogra Rajpoot, who had nothing in common with them, was not running smoothly, and, at one time, threatened to involve us in serious military operations. There was a feud of long standing between Imamuddin, the existing ruler of Kashmere under the Lahore Durbar, and Golab Sing, whom we had practically bound ourselves to put in his place. Willing to give up so lucrative a post to no one, least of all to his private foe, and secretly encouraged, as we discovered shortly afterwards, by Lal Sing, who had been a party to the arrangement, Imamuddin refused to obey the orders of the Durbar, picked a quarrel with one of the chief officers who had been deputed to take over the country, killed him, and drove off his troops.

Incensed at the breach of the treaty, and fearing whereunto these things might grow, Lord Hardinge, through the medium of John Lawrence, called peremptorily on the Durbar to fulfil its obligations and drive out Imamuddin. The Durbar, at first, affected to disbelieve the story. They made excuses, and procrastinated as best they could. But John Lawrence was firm, and compelled them to do what was naturally so distasteful to them. 'Tej Sing,' he says, 'has been loth to march. I believe he is an arrant coward, and, but for us, would not move an inch. I went and comforted him, telling him he would gain a great name and our favour with very little trouble.'

At last, seven thousand Sikhs were collected together and crossed the Ravi under John's own eye.

I saw the last corps crossing early this morning (October 2). The Sikhs put their men over a river with greater facility than ours do. The men went readily enough, but I had to *drive* the Sirdars regularly out of the city. The men behaved exceedingly well. I had not the slightest trouble with them. The Sirdars behaved equally ill : a more wretched set of fellows I never saw. Runjore Sing and one or two others have



not yet started; they are looking out for good omens, and I send a sowar twice a day to inquire whether they are propitious.

But the sight of military movements roused, as always, John's military instincts. The old ambition, repressed by his sister and by the force of circumstances, was still strong within him, and he threw out a feeler on the subject to his friend Currie:—

October 3.

If Government wish it, I should be delighted to go up to Sealkote or with Tej Sing. I should like nothing better. I wish I had the command; I would soon settle our friend the Sheikh. But Lord Hardinge may think that soldiering is not my business, and perhaps I cannot do better than stay here and keep the Durbar in order. Nothing will be done by them without our constraining them to do it.

Meanwhile John Lawrence was reluctantly coming to the conviction that the Sheikh Imamuddin was, all the time, acting under secret instructions from Lahore; and if so, Lal Sing would, of course, do his best to thwart the expedition and even reverse its object. So it was arranged that Henry Lawrence should return from Simla, and, accompanying the Sikh army with a small force of his own, should endeavour to keep it up to the mark. Herbert Edwardes was to do the same with Golab Sing, who, as it seemed, was anxious to meet with opposition that he might have the better excuse for plundering his new subjects. We had, indeed, little reason to be proud of our nominee. 'Well known as he is, both in Jullundur and Lahore,' says John Lawrence, 'nobody has ever yet been heard to say a word in his favour.'—'He is the worst native I have ever come in contact with,' says Herbert Edwardes, who was closeted with him daily, 'a bad king, a miser, and a liar.'—'He is avaricious and cruel by nature,' says a third witness—who had the best opportunities of judging—'deliberately committing the most horrible atrocities for the purpose of investing his name with a horror which shall keep down all thoughts of resistance to his power.' Such was the man whom, as ill luck would have it, it was our business now to place by means of Sikh arms, against the wishes of the Sikhs, and, *à fortiori*, against the wishes of his hapless subjects that were to be, on the throne of the loveliest country in the world. And poor Henry

Lawrence, who, from the most chivalrous but mistaken of motives, had been led into advocating the arrangement, often found himself very hard put to it to defend 'his friend Golab,' as John humorously calls him, from the candid criticisms of his best friends, and from the scruples of his own conscience. It was an unpalatable business enough, and the only consolation was that the Sheikh whom he was to displace was little better: 'ambition, pride, cruelty, and intrigue, strangely mixed up with indolence, effeminacy, voluptuousness, and timidity'—these were the chief characteristics, as drawn by one who knew him well, of Imamuddin. There was little indeed to choose between them. 'If Golab Sing flayed a chief alive,' says John Lawrence, 'Imamuddin boiled a Pundit to death: they are certainly a pair of amiables.'

The expedition, when it was once fairly launched under Henry Lawrence's guidance, went well enough. He knew that there was treachery rampant behind him at Lahore, and that it was lurking among the troops who accompanied him. But a whisper in the ear of Lal Sing's wakil, that, if aught happened to him, his brother John, whose force of character Lal knew too well, would immediately occupy the fort, put Lal Sing himself into confinement, and seize the person of the young Maharaja, removed all danger from that quarter. Henry Lawrence's own force of will and energy did the rest. Imamuddin surrendered at the very moment when the Sikh troops who had been sent against him were debating whether they should not go over to his side, and all parties returned amicably to Lahore, where the Sheikh, who had not presented any balance-sheet for years, was to give an account of his stewardship, to pay up and disband his troops, and to justify his hostile acts. Willing to act on Lal Sing's instructions while it suited his own purposes to do so, Imamuddin had no intention of suffering for him in silence, and on the way down to Lahore he produced the secret orders on which he had, all along, been acting.

The real offender, the Regent Lal Sing, was now, on December 2, brought to trial before his own ministers and the leading Sirdars, in the presence of five British Commissioners—Sir Frederick Currie, Sir John Littler, Colonel Goldie, and the two Lawrences. It was a great state trial,

striking enough in its antecedents, its surroundings, and its results. The production in court of the papers signed by Lal Sing himself, his lame denials, his condemnation by his own ministers, his solemn deposition, the outburst of grief on the part of the Maharani when she learned that she was to part for ever not only with her vizier but her lover, the departure of Lal Sing as a prisoner from the tent which he had entered as a prince, and his removal, without a drop of bloodshed or a symptom of a riot, from the Sikh capital to the British frontier station of Ferozepore,—these were some of the sensational incidents in the trial.

But the consequences were even more remarkable. For the council of eight Sirdars who assumed the government in Lal Sing's place, when they found that we were determined to leave the country, unless our control was to be complete—in other words, unless the whole administration of the Punjab was submitted to the supervision of the British Resident, who was to act through the Durbar, and when the young Maharaja came of age was to restore to it its absolute independence—the whole body of Sirdars and 'pillars of the state,' fifty-one in number, came, and, without one dissentient voice, implored us to remain on our own terms. And thus, by the treaty of Byrowal, in accordance with the wishes of the chiefs themselves, and the assent, however grudgingly given, of the Queen-mother, Henry Lawrence found himself installed for eight years the supreme ruler of the Punjab.

The new arrangement gave him something like free scope for his energy and philanthropy. Hitherto, he had been bound hand and foot, and could only offer advice to those who had stopped their ears, or could do so, if the advice given was unpleasant. Henceforward, he was invested by treaty 'with an unlimited authority' in every department of the state, and he, forthwith, drew around him a band of assistants who were united to him by bonds of personal attachment and sympathy, the like to which has never been seen in India. The names of George Lawrence, Herbert Edwardes, John Nicholson, Edward Lake, James Abbott, Arthur Cocks, Lewin Bowring, Harry Lumsden, Reynell Taylor, George Macgregor, Richard Pollock, and John Becher, have, every one of them, become more or less historical, and most of them will occur repeatedly in the course of

this biography. They worked now with a will, under Henry Lawrence, to remedy the worst abuses of the Sikh administration, in the generous hope that the last extremity of annexation might be avoided. They worked with equal devotion when that annexation had become an accomplished fact, and when their beloved chief had become the head of the Punjab Board of Administration. When the Board was broken up, recruited by a goodly number of men who were almost as much attracted by the widely different gifts of the younger as they themselves had been by those of the elder brother, they worked on, with undiminished zeal, under John Lawrence, as Chief Commissioner. When the mutiny broke out they were still to stand shoulder to shoulder—if such a phrase may be used of men who were hundreds of miles apart, and who rarely looked upon a white face—were to carry on the administration of the province as if it were in a time of profound peace, and to furnish the means of crushing the danger far beyond its limits. And, once more, they have ruled since then, in one shape or another, in the most widely scattered posts and with the most signal success, nearly the whole of India.

The treaty of Byrowal, which gave Henry Lawrence so splendid a position, enabled his brother John to return at length to his proper charge in the Jullundur Doab. Moved by affection for his brother, and by his public spirit, he had, for nine long months, cut himself off from his wife and family, and, during five of them—from August to December—had thrown himself ungrudgingly into the work at Lahore. A domestic event of much interest had occurred during his absence, in the birth, at Simla, on October 1, 1846, of his eldest son John. His enforced absence from his wife at such a time was a great trial to him, and, apart from this, he had been chafing under the restraints and the hopelessness of the task imposed upon him; all the more so, because he was conscious that his assistants at Jullundur, being new to their work, could not, with all their zeal, be equal to duties which would have taxed the abilities of the most experienced heads in the North-West.

Lahore is not a satisfactory place (he had written to Currie as far back as November 4); I shall not be sorry when I am allowed to leave it. Pray let me know if I may return to the Jullundur when the Sheikh is

well in hand, and my brother comes back. I am ready to do what Government wants, but, personally, I prefer my work there. It is a new country, and my assistants need looking after; and I want to put my stamp on it, that in after times people may look back and recall my Raj with satisfaction. No portion of our Empire promises better than it does.

It was a bold wish, or rather a prophecy: one of those pregnant prophecies which, when uttered by such a man, tend to bring about their own fulfilment. It was fulfilled, not in the Jullundur Doab alone, where, within two years of the time when the words were written, John Lawrence found that, while war was raging in all other parts of the Punjab, he was able to preserve almost unbroken peace; nor, again, in the wider field of the Punjab alone, where his name is still *the* name which stands absolutely by itself as a ruling power among the natives,—but, in its measure also over the whole of India.

When John Lawrence got back to Jullundur he found the settlement of the revenue actively progressing under the supervision of George Christian, a young man on whom he had cast a covetous eye at Lahore as one capable of great things. The first notice of him I find in the papers before me is at the time when Imamuddin had just surrendered and was returning amicably with us—too amicably, as Christian thought—to Lahore, and is highly characteristic of the writer. ‘Christian,’ says John Lawrence, ‘is going about asking, “Is no one to be hanged?” and seems melancholy that echo answers, “No one.”’ And the advice John Lawrence gives him before entering on his settlement work is even more characteristic: ‘I expect to be in Jullundur by December at the latest, but should I not, mind you assess low; if you don’t I shall be your enemy for life; and indeed, what is worse, you will be your own. Let nothing tempt you to assess high.’ George Barnes, another very able officer, whose Report on Kangra I have already quoted, was appointed, at the same time, to the revenue settlement in that district, while Cust and Lake and Hercules Scott were rapidly losing the only reproach which could fairly be levelled at them—the only reproach which is sure always to mend itself—that of youth and inexperience.

But John Lawrence now found himself face to face with

the great difficulty which was to meet him again in the Punjab—the treatment of the feudatories of the dispossessed government. What was the question, and how did he deal with it? It will be well to make the case as clear as possible at once, and to put it, as nearly as may be, in John Lawrence's own words.

Most of the land in the Jullundur Doab, as in other parts of the Punjab, was held by jagheerdars, or feudatories, of the Sikh conquerors who had ousted the Mogul. The whole territory had been ceded by the treaty of Umritsur to the British Government, and it was within our right as conquerors, due regard being had to justice and policy, to deal with it as we thought best. It was, of course, necessary that the province should pay the cost of its occupation and management, and the question now was how this end could be best secured. It was impossible to increase the land tax, the great source of revenue in India, for its incidence was already too heavy for the scanty means of the masses. In fact, we had already largely reduced it. There seemed therefore to be only one course open to us, and that was to reduce the holdings of the feudatories. Most of them had held their fiefs on condition of military or general, or sometimes, of religious, service. All need for such arrangements had now gone by, and John Lawrence used to reply with somewhat brusque frankness to petitions which pleaded for the retention of their privileges: 'We want neither your soldiers nor your prayers, and cannot afford to pay you for them.' Accordingly, all these services were commuted into a money payment; the fiefs were proportionately reduced and the remainder maintained—the older grants in perpetuity to male heirs, the more recent grants for the lives of the parties who were in possession.

Some hardship was, undoubtedly, inflicted and some ill-feeling generated by these measures, and it is much to be regretted that it was so. But it is equally certain that there was nothing essentially unjust in them, still less anything unjust according to native ideas. No native dynasty ever succeeded another without making short work of its predecessor's grants. Above all, it is clear that the change was absolutely necessary in the interest of the masses. The country—and by the country it must always be remembered

I mean the whole bulk of its population, each one of whom, if you prick him, must needs bleed—could not afford to pay for two systems of government—one our own, based on regular establishments and money payments; the other based on feudal service supported by large territorial possessions. All these feudatories, although many of them were actually holding fiefs on our side of the Sutlej and were under our protection, had joined the Sikh army when it invaded our territory in quest of new acquisitions. If it was fair to deprive the Punjab Government of a large tract of country, for having invaded British territory, it was equally fair that its feudatories should bear their share of the consequences. Our mode of dealing with them was certainly more liberal than any which they themselves would have meted out to a people whom they had conquered. In particular, it was much more liberal than that with which Runjeet Sing himself had treated the chiefs of the Punjab plains whom he had subdued. In any case, our measures were justified by success. The great feudatories submitted, as a body, to their altered circumstances, without opposition and with a good grace, and, what is more remarkable, though treated with less indulgence than the chiefs of the adjoining hills, and though urged by them to rise against us in the second Sikh war, with one single exception, they all refused to do so. And this one exception only served to prove the rule, for it was that of the Bedi Bikrama Sing, the high priest of the Sikhs and the special patron of female infanticide!

But as this matter is important, and as the difference of opinion upon it between the elder and the younger brother was ultimately to become so vital, John Lawrence shall put his case in his own words. Here is a letter to Sir Frederick Currie, dated October 17, 1846, which indicates his view in a narrow compass:—

I am anxious for your opinion on the following point. There are some five hundred villages in the Jullundur, worth about five lacs of rupees, which were conquered by different Sikh chiefs seventy or eighty years ago. In some cases, three or four, or even more, villages are held by one or two persons; in others, there are from five to thirty and forty shareholders. I propose to recommend to Government that the possession in all these cases be affirmed merely for life, and the shares lapse to Government on the demise of each occupant. My

brother thinks we ought to maintain them for ever, subject to a certain payment. What do you say? These are not private properties, but alienations of the Government rights. They won them by the strong hand; they have now forfeited them by the same law by which they held them, namely, that of the sword. Why should we give up the Government right? I see no policy in so doing; politically, these people will never support us, and to the country they are a perfect incubus. Why not let them gradually fall in, and let the descendants of these conquerors return to the plough whence their fathers came? What increases the difficulty is, that by the Hindu law of inheritance these lands will be divided into infinitesimal portions gradually, and as the occupants are not proprietors, they will not become petty yeomen cultivating their own lands, but beggarly gentlemen, too proud to work and unwilling to starve. You cannot remedy this by entailing the property on the eldest son, for, in that case, where you please one, you put up the backs of ten, besides going against custom and precedent. Runjeet Sing was gradually getting rid of all these feudal lords. If you think that the heirs have rights, why not allow them so many years' purchase for their rights directly the division comes below one village?

The time passed away pleasantly enough with John Lawrence, as he saw his work in the Jullundur Doab growing under his hand. But, in August, he was obliged to leave it again and go on the same thankless errand to Lahore. The strain of the work in the Punjab, with the full powers which now belonged to him, had been too much for the ever active, yet, long since, overwrought, frame of Henry Lawrence. Supported by his able assistants, and stimulated by the field for usefulness which the new powers committed to him had seemed to open up, he had thrown himself, during the last seven months,—three of them the hottest in the year—with headlong ardour into his work. To reduce the overgrown army, which before the Sutlej campaign had been 85,000 strong, to the moderate number of some 20,000; to secure for the discharged soldiers their arrears of pay and induce them to return to peaceful avocations; to subject those who remained to strict discipline and yet, by paying them punctually, to make them contented with their lot; to strike off the most obnoxious taxes, and moderate and equalise those which were retained; to compel the tax-gatherers of the Khalsa, the 'official locusts' of the land, to disgorge their ill-gotten gains, and to ensure that the money paid in to them, in future, should reach the public treasury; to intro-



duce a very simple penal code which should be adapted to the wants and to the intelligence of the people,—these were some of the objects which Henry Lawrence put before himself, and which he had already done something towards securing. In order to prepare the way for this code, he had summoned to Lahore, just before his health gave way, fifty Sikh heads of villages, who, after sitting there in solemn conclave for some months, were to reduce the unwritten customs and morals of the people to a written law, which was at once to reform and perpetuate them.

The 'unlimited authority' given to Henry Lawrence by treaty, of course he had found, in practice, to be limited enough. For it was a part of the programme to work as far as possible through the Durbar, almost every member of whom, as he would have himself admitted, was alike venal and selfish, while the Queen-mother, who had, from the first, chafed at the interference of the British, was not likely to be more friendly now that they had torn away her lover from her. This 'Hindu Messalina,' as Lord Hardinge and Herbert Edwardes, justly or unjustly, call her, soon indeed consoled herself for the loss of an old favourite by finding new ones, and it was not long before her slave girl, Mungala, was detected carrying treasonable messages to Lal Sing and to Moolraj, the powerful and semi-independent ruler of Mooltan. At last, she put the finishing stroke to her iniquities by managing to insult the Resident, the Ministers, and the whole Durbar, at once. It had been arranged that a grand Durbar should be held at which Tej Sing, the President of the Council, was to be installed as Raja of Sealkote, while sundry decorations were to be bestowed on other deserving Sirdars. The astrologers were duly consulted, the auspicious day was fixed, and all the chivalry of the moribund Khalsa were assembled to take part in the ceremonial. But when Tej Sing knelt before the youthful Maharaja to receive the saffron spot on the forehead which was to dub him a Raja, 'the little prince proudly folded his arms in token of refusal, and flung himself back on his velvet chair with a tutored obstinacy which was not to be shaken.'

Such an insult was too great to be put up with; and Henry Lawrence, knowing well that the Maharani had been, throughout, intriguing against his authority, with the full

assent and consent of the Durbar, decreed the separation of the boy King from his unscrupulous mother. She stormed and raved and scratched in vain, and was despatched in a dhoolie to Shikarpore, twenty miles away, with no greater difficulty than Lal Sing had been removed before her. Here she became the focus of ever fresh and more formidable intrigues, and fresh measures of precaution had to be taken against her. About the time of the second Sikh war, she was transferred to Benares, where, having changed her dress with a sempstress, she escaped to Nepal, and thence, after many vicissitudes, to England.

The removal of the Queen-mother from Lahore was one of the last acts of Henry Lawrence as Resident. His health failed him, and in August he left for Simla, only returning, in November, for a passing visit, on his way to England. One of the most important and, very possibly, the happiest chapter of his life was now closed. He had found at Lahore full scope for all his vigour. He had had that variety and multiplicity of occupation and interests which were as the breath of life to him. Of a sanguine temperament, he was buoyed up by the hope of saving a native state whose history appealed to many of his finer sympathies and instincts, and of stemming the tide of annexation which was, so soon, to swallow up so many of the independent principalities of India. He had been compelled to deal with no burning questions of state policy, such as were to confront him when he returned from England to a post of still greater dignity and importance, the Presidency of the Board of Administration of the province which, in spite of all his generous efforts, it had been found necessary to annex. His work had been one of pure philanthropy, in which it was hardly possible for honourable and intelligent men to differ widely. He had been surrounded by a band of assistants, 'every one of whom was his friend, and most of whom had been introduced into the Punjab by him,' and shared with him all his views and sympathies. More than this, he had had the help, whenever it was required, of his brother John, a man whose arm was as strong as his mind was massive and methodical, and his spirit willing and self-sacrificing. 'Each of my assistants,' says Henry Lawrence, 'was a good man. The most were excellent officers. My chief help, however,

was in my brother John, without whom I must have had difficulty in carrying on. On three different occasions, during my temporary absence, he took charge for me. . . . In various ways he was most useful, and gave me always such help as only a brother could.'

Finally, that we may estimate aright the happiness of Henry, during this, as compared with the next and better-known period in his life, it must be remembered that he had been working, as Resident, under a chief who was thoroughly congenial to him, a chief as chivalrous, as high-minded, and as philanthropic as he was himself, one who wrote to him and to whom he wrote—as a large budget of correspondence in my hands shows—with all the freedom and affection of a brother. When he returned, things were to be widely different. For Lord Dalhousie and he were to be as antagonistic to each other as two great and high-principled men could well be. The one was to jar upon the other to an extent which was to be fatal to the peace of mind of the more sensitive and delicate nature. What Henry Lawrence thought of Lord Hardinge has been put on record by Henry Lawrence himself in an elaborate essay on his administration, and is preserved in the edition of his collected essays. What Lord Hardinge thought of Henry Lawrence is evident from the feeling which was pretty general throughout India, that the Governor-General was too much under his influence. It was remarked that he had planted a 'triumvirate of Lawrences' beyond the frontiers of British India, and was pretty much ruled by one of them within them.

## CHAPTER X.

THE SECOND SIKH WAR. 1848.

THE second prolonged residence of John Lawrence, while acting for his brother at Lahore, may be dismissed with greater brevity than the first ; for the picture which I have endeavoured to draw of the one may, *mutatis mutandis*, serve for the other also. The banishment of Lal Sing and of the Queen-mother had removed some of the chief causes of anxiety. But the more chronic difficulties, the venality and the selfishness, the intrigues and the empty exchequer of the Sirdars, through whom the Resident was bound to work, were the same as ever. They offered a passive resistance to the, possibly, over-active efforts which were made to improve them in European fashion ; and it was more difficult for a man of John Lawrence's temperament to submit with equanimity to such passive resistance than to any amount of active opposition. He found, no doubt, in the full powers conferred on him by treaty, a wider field of usefulness than had been open to him before ; and of these, with the help of his brother's assistants who traversed the country, making a summary assessment and endeavouring to eradicate the three great social evils of suttee, female infanticide and slavery, he availed himself to the full. The security with which these young Englishmen rode about, quite alone, on their errands of mercy, seems strange enough when we recollect the frequent revolutions which had taken place since the death of Runjeet Sing.

But, notwithstanding these encouragements, there were circumstances attending John Lawrence's second residence at Lahore which rendered it even more distasteful to him than his former one. He was asked to hold the post, not

directly for his brother, as Henry Lawrence had himself desired, but for Frederick Currie, who, at some future time not named, was to step in and take it out of his hands. Currie had already been provided with a seat in Council at Calcutta; he knew little of the Punjab, while Lawrence knew it well; the Sirdars themselves, moreover, who had, at first, been somewhat nettled by the home truths and blunt directness of John, had now come to appreciate the ready humour, the unrestrained intercourse, and the kindly heart which accompanied and set them off. 'The Durbar,' he writes to his brother, 'are very melancholy about my going away. Old Tej Sing asked me if he could not get a year's leave; even Dena Nath does not like the change; and I am sure I can be no favourite of his. Yesterday, while talking to me, he said that things would never go on. "With you," he said, "we can talk and badger and dispute; you are one of our own; but what can we do with Currie Sahib?"' That which made the arrangement proposed by Lord Hardinge all the more unaccountable was that Currie himself did not like it, and thought that he was coming down merely 'to oblige the Lawrences.'

The difficulties and annoyances of John's public duties at Lahore were not lessened by the presence of any extra comforts in his domestic life. Neither at that, nor at any other period of their lives, did the Lawrence brothers care much for the luxuries or refinements of civilisation. At the Residency house there were very few of the comforts, and not an abundant supply even of what are commonly considered to be the necessities, of life. Henry was as careless as John of appearances, and was even more unconscious of his surroundings. The one candle that lighted, or failed to light, the tent in which he and his wife and an assistant would be working at night, was, as I have been told by an eye-witness, placed, not in a candlestick, but in the neck of an empty beer-bottle; and, on one occasion, when a second candle was wanted for the variety of occupations which were going on, Henry, with the utmost simplicity, remarked that some one must first drink another bottle of beer! A curious commentary this on the 'gorgeous East,' but one which, peradventure, the great Puritan poet himself would have been among the first to appreciate. In his lavish hospitality,

Henry Lawrence would often ask more people to dinner than by any possibility he had room for, and then, as likely as not, would forget to order the dinner for them. And sometimes a provident friend, who made it his business to look after his chief's interests, would inquire privately whether the dinner had been ordered, or endeavour to supply any deficiencies, surreptitiously, from his own table.

When John Lawrence took his brother's place at the Residency, there was much more forethought, but there was still little that could be called comfort. His wife and family indeed were with him, a boon of which he had been deprived during nine months of the year 1846, and five of the year 1847. But the house which had sufficed for the ample hospitalities and the simple wants of the Lawrence brothers, and had often given shelter, in patriarchal fashion, to a goodly band of assistants as well, was not found to be large enough for Currie, who had been designated as their successor. The discomforts of building were thus added to those which were inherent in the place and in the work, and one or two details of the domestic arrangements, which I gather from John Lawrence's letters, may, perchance, not be without their interest to another and more exacting generation. John Lawrence and his wife, his three children, and a European servant, had only two rooms, twelve feet by fifteen, to divide between them. Henry Lawrence and Robert Napier, now Lord Napier of Magdala, shared a third; while the 'assistants' were lucky enough if they fared as did their chiefs, and had half a room apiece! Such was the mode of life, and such the school in which some of the best and greatest of our Indian administrators were trained. The details may seem trivial, but they have an interest and importance of their own. For it was here that,—following the example set them by the two brothers, the two master-spirits of Henry and John Lawrence,—a whole band of men learned lessons of simplicity and of contentment, of absorption in their work, and of sympathy with the natives, which they were never afterwards to unlearn, and which may still be said to be a real power in India. It was from such materials, and under such influences, that one of the noblest portions of the great fabric of our Indian Empire was being built up—an Empire as majestic as that of Rome, and

ruled, on the whole, with a beneficence of purpose towards its subject races of which few Romans ever dreamed.

Hanc olim veteres vitam coluere Sabini,  
Hanc *Remus et frater* ; sic fortis Etruria crevit,  
Scilicet et rerum facta est pulcherrima Roma.

One friendship formed by John Lawrence during this visit to Lahore, and never afterwards interrupted, should be noticed here. Under the peculiar conditions of our occupation of the Punjab, Lahore was the most important military station in India. Sir John Littler, one of our best generals, was in command of the Division, and when Colin Campbell—the famous soldier who had played his part in the retreat to Corunna, had fought at Vittoria, had led the forlorn hope and bled at San Sebastian—was retiring from the scene of military operations in China, at the head of his splendid 98th Regiment, Lord Hardinge determined to secure his services also for the post of danger, and gave him the command of a brigade at Lahore. Here he became a fast friend, first of Henry, and then of John Lawrence. ‘I am delighted,’ he says in his ‘Diary,’ ‘at the prospect of John Lawrence’s remaining at Lahore during his brother’s absence.’ He frequently accompanied John during his shooting excursions—an amusement in which the civilian was, from long practice, much more at home than the soldier. John Lawrence was an excellent shot. I have been told by his friends that he would kill a jackal with a pistol from his buggy as he was driving by ; while Colin Campbell regretfully confesses that ‘he could not touch a feather from the back of an elephant.’

Lord Dalhousie, the new Governor-General, on his arrival in India on January 12, 1848, was received with the usual honours at Government House, and, in the following week, Lord Hardinge sailed for England, accompanied by Henry Lawrence, after assuring his successor that, so far as he could see, ‘it would not be necessary to fire a gun in India for seven years to come !’ But, still, Currie came not to Lahore, and still, John Lawrence worked on cheerfully, though he was anything but satisfied with his position there. ‘I hope,’ he had written to his successor-designate

on November 21, 'that you will come as soon as you can conveniently do so. As far as I am concerned, the sooner I am out of the Punjab the better I shall be pleased.' But the following February still found him in harness in the Punjab, and when, at last, he heard that Currie was actually on his way, he wrote to his brother Henry, offering, with his usual unselfishness to return to Lahore at any time rather than bring him back from England before his health was re-established.

As I said before, sooner than bring you out before your time, I will come back here again, if necessary. But I would much rather that Currie stayed the whole time. These frequent changes are a great evil. No man has time to carry out his plans, and therefore to do much good. . . . It was bad enough when either my own reputation or yours was concerned. But it is worse now; for no one likes being made a mere warming-pan of. Government has just written to me to do nothing about Mooltan till Currie comes. Thus six weeks are lost. In two months I would have assessed all Mooltan. Men sent there in the middle of March will only lose their health, going about, and not accomplish the work in double the time.

These words, as we shall hereafter see, have an immediate bearing on events which were destined to set the Punjab in a flame, and to lead to the annexation of the whole country. Had John Lawrence been allowed to have his way in the matter he would have sent Arthur Cocks to Mooltan in January, and the second Sikh war, with its unaccountable blunderings and Cadmean victories, might, possibly, have never taken place at all.

The long-expected Resident arrived on March 6, and he and John Lawrence, in spite of previous heart-burnings, got on capitally together. They discussed all the pressing questions and arrived at a thorough accord. The new buildings had been completed and the 'assistants,' with two exceptions, were cleared out to Mean Meer. The patriarchal period at the Residency had now passed away for ever. 'Whereas in your and my time,' says John to his brother, 'there was neither privacy nor comfort, there will now probably be too much of both.' On March 17, 'St. Patrick's Day,'—as his father, with, possibly, awakened memories of his lineage and his youthful escapades, remarks with satisfaction,—a second son, Henry, was born; and on April 3



the whole Lawrence family, with the baby, which was then little more than a fortnight old, started for Jullundur, 'right glad to go.'

John Lawrence, after making a rapid tour through his province, reached in safety the beautiful hill station of Dhurm-sala, where he had bought a house. The prospect of spending a few weeks in that cool climate, with only an occasional visit to the plains when it might be necessary to hold the sessions, seemed too delightful to be true. And, unfortunately, it was too delightful to be true. For, before many days had passed, news came that Vans Agnew and Anderson, the two officers who had been deputed to Mooltan, had been foully murdered, and that the Government was in the dilemma which John Lawrence had foreseen, and had, in vain, tried to avert. We must either now enter, at once, on military movements which might land us in a general war in the middle of the hot season, and at the hottest place in India ; or, if we postponed operations till the cool season, we must run the even greater risk of appearing to hesitate before a foe, and should give time for all the elements of discontent, first, to concentrate themselves at Mooltan, and, then, to burst into a flame which might envelop the Punjab.

What were the circumstances which had placed us in this sad dilemma ? Moolraj, the Dewan of Mooltan, was the son and successor of the famous Sawun Mull, to whom Runjeet Sing had committed the care of the redoubtable fortress which he had at last taken. The fortifications of Mooltan had been known to fame ever since the time of Alexander, and it was not likely that the chief who held it would long remain dependent on anyone else. Sawun Mull had been a good ruler, as Eastern rulers go, and after a reign of twenty years, in which he had amassed an enormous fortune, had died in 1844, leaving his son, Moolraj, the heir to his wealth and to his kingdom. The Sikhs, whatever their good qualities, are the moneymakers—the Jews or the Armenians—of the Indian peninsula ; and Lal Sing, as the representative of the paramount power, demanded from Moolraj a nuzzur, or succession-duty, of a crore of rupees. It was a struggle for money rather than for power on the part of each, and Moolraj long managed to fight off the evil day.

But he was at last induced, under a safe-conduct from John Lawrence, to come to Lahore; and there, after tedious, but not unfriendly, negotiations, the payment of the succession-duty was arranged. But when Moolraj, in a moment of vexation, expressed a wish to resign his post, he was taken at his word. Another Sirdar was appointed in his place, and two English officers were told off to accompany him to Mooltan and act there as they were acting in other parts of the Punjab. Arthur Cocks, 'a fine, resolute, good-tempered fellow,' as John Lawrence calls him, who knew the Sikhs well, had been selected by both brothers for the ticklish business. But an order from head-quarters to take no step in the matter till the new Resident should arrive, had caused another three months' delay, and had given the discontent at Mooltan time to come to a head. Currie, on his arrival, selected Vans Agnew, a civilian, and Lieutenant Anderson, brother-in-law to Outram, for the dangerous duty; and, supported by a mixed force of five hundred Sikhs and Ghoorkas, they had set out with the new Dewan, to take over the government from Moolraj. Unfortunately they did not go with their escort. They went by water, while the escort went by land, so that, by the end of the journey, they were hardly known to their natural protectors.

What followed is too well known, and has been described by too many pens, to call for a fresh description here. Vans Agnew and Anderson were treacherously struck down as they were riding through the gateway by the side of Moolraj, and, after they had been heroically defended, for some twelve hours, by that portion of their escort which remained faithful, were brutally murdered and their dead bodies were treated with every kind of indignity. The original attack seems not to have been premeditated by those who struck the blow, still less to have been deliberately planned by the authorities. But in Asiatic cities, even more than in European, the sight of the means to do ill deeds often makes ill deeds done. The more resolute and reckless carry away by sheer force of will the half-hearted or well-disposed, and, thus, a whole city becomes involved in the guilt of a few. But in any case, Moolraj, unlike the late ill-fated ruler of Cabul, made the deed his own by adopting it after it was done, and called by proclamation on all the inhabitants of

the Punjab—Sikh, Hindu, and Afghan—to rise against the hated foreigner.

Now then, if ever, was the time for prompt and energetic action. It was an occasion to put to the test the knowledge of the native character and the fibre of each man who was in authority. What Lord Hardinge and Henry Lawrence would have done under such circumstances is clear enough from what they had so lately done in the case of Imamuddin in Kashmere. What Currie would have done, had he been left free to act, may be inferred from the steps he did, at once, take for a movement towards Mooltan, and from the advance which, later on, he carried out against the wishes, if not positive orders, of his superiors. How John Lawrence would have acted is put beyond the reach of doubt by the letters I have before me—letters written, not with that cheap wisdom which comes after the event and points out what the writer would have done when there was no longer any chance of his being able to do it, but sent off in hot haste, on the day on which he received the news, to Elliot the Secretary to Government, to Currie the Resident at Lahore, and to Wheeler the Brigadier-General commanding at Jullundur. This it is my business to bring out, rather than painfully to track the messages which passed and repassed between the Resident, the Governor-General, and the Commander-in-Chief, and which ended in their doing nothing at all.

How was this? The Commander-in-Chief was brave and generous as a lion, but he was always in extremes. When his blood was up, and he was within sound of a gun, there was nothing he would not do and dare. When he had cooled down, he showed an amount of caution which, in a less heroic nature, might have been put down to inertness or even timidity. The Governor-General was new to India. He was only thirty-six years of age, and, naturally enough, in this, the first burning question which had come before him, he was disposed to trust to the counsels of others rather than his own keen intelligence and masterful will. It was, perhaps, the only occasion in the whole of his Indian career on which he can be accused of having done so. The conclusion to which these two highest authorities came, was that it was too late to risk the safety of English troops in any active operations; in other words, as Henry Lawrence

sarcastically put it, they came to a resolution 'to have a grand *shikar* (hunt) in the cold season, under the lead of the Governor-General.' Had the advice given by John Lawrence, and supported, to a great extent, by Currie, been followed to the end, it is not too much to say that the disturbance at Mooltan might—as we have almost invariably found in India under similar circumstances—very possibly, have ended where it began, and have proved a mere local outbreak.

The murder was committed on April 20. On the 30th, the news reached John in his remote hill station under the snowy peaks of the Himalayas; and, on that same day, he wrote two highly characteristic letters to Elliot and to Currie, extracts from which I proceed to give. We feel, as we read, how sound were the instincts and how keen the insight of the man who could divine, at a glance, the exact nature of the outbreak, and suggest the measures which would be most certain to suppress it. They are an anticipation of that far greater crisis which he would have to meet hereafter, when, cut off—perhaps happily cut off—from Governors-General and Commanders-in-Chief, it would be his to command rather than to suggest, to act rather than to think, and to break through all the restraints of etiquette and precedence in order that something of infinitely more value than etiquette and precedence might weather the storm.

My dear Elliot,—I have just heard from Currie, dated the 25th, of the melancholy affair at Mooltan, and the deaths of poor Agnew and Anderson. I have written to Currie offering to go over if my services can be of use. I do not want to thrust myself where I may not be wanted. But in such a crisis I think it right to volunteer. Currie seems inclined to leave it to the Durbar, and not to march troops on Mooltan. I send you a copy of my reply to him. The season, no doubt, is terribly bad for moving troops. But the alternative seems worse. The lives of none of our officers in Bunnoo, Peshawur, and Huzara will be safe, if speedy retribution does not fall on these scoundrels. It was touch and go in the Kashmere affair two years ago. It was then a question whether the Sheikh surrendered or the troops went over to him. If we do nothing, the whole of the disbanded soldiery of the Manjha will flock down and make common cause with the mutineers.

On the same day, he wrote to Currie :—

Bad as Moolraj's conduct may have been, I should doubt very much

if he has had anything to do with the original outbreak. Depend on it he has been forced into it by circumstances. He was, notoriously, a timid man, and one of the chief points on which he originally so much insisted with me was, that he might be allowed to get away before it could be publicly known that he had given up the country. It has often happened that, in a row, the Sikhs will not fight against each other, and that the weaker party invariably joins the stronger. Still it seems incredible that Khan Sing's force should have behaved as it has done. I much fear now that any troops of the Durbar's marching on Mooltan will do as Khan Sing's have done. Despite the heat and advanced season of the year, I would counsel action. Otherwise you will have *émeutes*, as you fear, in Bunnoo, Huzara, and Peshawur. The officers, willing or not, must go with the soldiers to save their lives. Mooltan is a place of no strength. There is in your office a description of the fortifications, drawn up by poor Anderson. I would have over a brigade from Ferozepore and Jullundur, and march two European corps and six native ones on Mooltan. The place can't stand a siege. It can be shelled from a small height near it. I see great objection to this course. But I see greater ones in delay. The Durbar neither can do nor will do anything. I never saw them do anything. The initiative must, in all cases, come from us. Should you think that I can be of use in any way you have only to say so. I could leave Barnes in charge of my office and be over with you in five days from Kangra. I have no personal wish in the matter, but if I can be of use, it is my duty, in such a crisis, to help you. I would come by Denanuggur.

It would have been difficult to give sounder advice than that which these letters, written off on the spur of the moment, contain. But it was not acted on, or, if acted on at all, not till it was too late to be of avail. It is true that John Lawrence had been misinformed as to the strength of Mooltan, and, as he admitted a few days later, it would have been unwise to advance upon it without a siege train. But was there not a siege train waiting, all ready for action, at Ferozepore, which could be carried by water down the Sutlej to within forty miles of the fortress?—and was it not to guard against precisely such an insurrectionary movement as this that Lord Hardinge had left behind him three moveable brigades, ready to take the field at the shortest notice, at Ferozepore, at Jullundur, and at Lahore? At that time, no preparations had been made by Moolraj for a siege, and an immediate advance, combined with the news that the 'guns were following' apace, would, probably, have taken the heart out of such resistance as he was pre-

pared to offer us. As regards the heat, if the English had been unequal to anything but fair-weather campaigns in India, they would never have conquered India at all. Seringapatam had been stormed on May 4—in the very height, that is, of the hot season; and, as John Lawrence thought of it, he must have recalled with a thrill of satisfaction that the storming party had been led by his gallant old father, who had been left lying for hours on the breach, in the fiery glare of the sun, and yet had weathered the storm. Alighur had been taken, and the battle of Assaye fought, in September, a more unhealthy season still; and John Lawrence himself recollected our troops marching up to Delhi from Shikawatti in June.

Happily, in another part of the Punjab, in the Derajat, there was a young lieutenant, then engaged in the Revenue Survey, who was in full sympathy not with the Governor-General or the Commander-in-Chief, but with the Commissioner of the Jullundur Doab, and who was in favour of immediate action. A few hasty lines from Agnew, addressed 'to General Van Cortlandt, in Bunnoo, or wherever else he may be,' had reached Herbert Edwardes in his tent at Dera Futteh Khan, on April 22, and had informed him of what had happened at Mooltan. Without waiting to refer the matter to any higher authorities, he, at once, determined to give all the aid he could. Accompanied only by the small force which formed the guard of a revenue officer in that turbulent district, and fully conscious that only a portion of it could be trusted, he collected boats, he crossed the Indus, he occupied Leia, the capital of Sing Saugar Doab, and there or therabouts, to use his own words, 'like a terrier barking at a tiger,' he awaited the attack of Moolraj. Availing himself of the hostility which he knew to exist between the different aces in the Punjab, he enrolled 3,000 Pathans; thus following the reverse of the process which afterwards stood us in such good stead during the Mutiny. He armed the Mussulmans of the frontier against the Sikhs and Mussulmans of Mooltan, as we afterwards armed the Sikhs against the Mussulmans and Hindus of Delhi. Strengthened by these levies, by Van Cortlandt—an able officer who had been in the Sikh service—from Bunnoo, and by some troops from Bahawul-

pore, under Lake, he defeated Moolraj on June 18, the anniversary of the battle of Waterloo, in a pitched battle on the field of Kynerec, and drove him headlong back towards Mooltan. Following him up, he fought and won, a few days later, a second battle at Suddosain, and actually penned Moolraj and his forces within the walls of his famous fortress! 'Now is the time to strike,' he wrote to Currie; 'it is painful to see that I have got to the end of my tether.' 'A few heavy guns, a mortar battery, a few sappers and miners, and Major Napier to look after them'—this was all the assistance he had asked from the authorities before his advance. But it was not forthcoming. He could not 'go beyond his tether;' but the exploits which, as a young subaltern, he had already performed were worthy of the man who, a few years later, in still more dangerous times, was to hold so gallantly, against mutineers within and enemies without, the all-important frontier post of Peshawur.

Hearing of Edwardes' double victory, the Resident, who was still opposed, or only lukewarmly supported, by the supreme authorities, sent, on his own responsibility, a force from Lahore under General Whish to co-operate with that before Mooltan. But it was too late. It could not prevent a general rising. At best, it could only check its progress. And, worse still, the warning which John Lawrence had given against employing Sikh troops to coerce their own countrymen was neglected, and with the result which he had foreseen. Shere Sing, the Sikh commander, went over, at the critical moment, to the enemy. The siege of Mooltan, which had just been begun, was raised; and 'the drum of religion,' whose first rumblings had already been heard in Huzara and at Peshawur, on the north and west, now sounded loud and long at Mooltan, in the south, and summoned the Sikhs to rise everywhere, and strike for 'God and the Guru' against the foreigner. The disbanded veterans of Ferozeshuhr and Sobraon left, once more, the mattock and plough, and hurried to support the nascent Khalsa commonwealth. Nor were they to return to their homes again till the doubtfully contested field of Ferozeshuhr had found its counterpart at Chillianwallah, and the crowning victory of the British at Sobraon had been thrown into the shade by their still more crowning victory at Gujerat.

The Mooltan outbreak, encouraged by our delays, had thus grown into a revolt of the Punjab, and the work of 1846 had to be begun over again. More than this, beyond the limits of the Punjab, Golab Sing, the monarch of our creation in Kashmere, was said to be only biding his time. And the much more formidable Dost Mohammed, hating, as well he might, those who had possessed the will to deprive him of his throne, and whose poverty alone had consented to restore it to him, entered into an alliance against us with the most inveterate enemies of his race and creed. It was a case of 'water with fire in ruin reconciled.' Sikh and Afghan, for the first time in their history, were to fight side by side; Peshawur, the most valuable acquisition of the Lion of the Punjab, was to revert to the Afghan; and 'the dream and the madness' of Dost Mohammed's life was to be fulfilled.

Roused by the extremity of the peril, the British lion began, at length, to bestir himself in earnest. Large reinforcements were called for from Bombay. Others came hurrying up from Bengal. Lord Dalhousie, shaking off his scruples and his advisers, set out, in October, from Calcutta, for the scene of active operations. 'Unwarned by precedent,' he said in public, at Barrackpore, just before he started, 'uninfluenced by example, the Sikh nation have called for war, and on my word, sirs, they shall have it with a vengeance.' And in October—exactly six months, that is, after the murder of Agnew and Anderson—the grand army which was to revenge it mustered at Ferozepore.

With the details of the war just begun, otherwise than as they affected John Lawrence, his province of the Jullundur Doab, his colleagues, and his future, this biography has little to do. A very rapid sketch must suffice.

It was not till November that Lord Gough took the command in person of the splendid army which had been collected. It was an army complete in all its branches, well supplied with cavalry, with draught animals, with ammunition, and with guns; an army which, looking at our long experience in India, people might have been excused for thinking would go anywhere and do anything. But the first action, fought on November 22, at Ramnuggur, on the Chenab, ended in a serious check, which, among



other heavy losses, cost us the lives of Cureton and W. Havelock. The second action of Sadoolapore, on December 3, though it was boldly claimed as a victory by the Governor-General and the Commander-in-Chief, only induced the Sikhs to retire, at their own discretion and in good order, from the Chenab to the Jhelum—from a good position, that is, to a still better one in their rear. And now, for six weeks more, Lord Gough, on whom the Governor-General, knowing his character, had enjoined strict caution, forebore to advance. At last, on January 11, he moved forward, and at three in the afternoon of the 13th,—his combative instincts aroused by some half-spent cannon-balls which came lumbering in,—the fiery old general, in defiance of the warning given him by the battles of Moodki and Feroze-shuhr, gave the order to attack.

The battle of Chillianwallah was one of those chequered and desperate conflicts which, in spite of the gallantry displayed by a large portion of our troops, was almost more dangerous to us than an out-and-out defeat. The advance of a brigade of infantry at a speed which brought them exhausted and breathless among the enemy's guns, and after exposing them at the same time to the galling cross-fire of Sikh marksmen concealed in the jungle, ended in a hasty retreat and heavy loss ; the advance of a brigade of cavalry without skirmishers in front, or supports to follow up behind, while our guns were so placed in their rear that not one of them could fire a shot in its support ; the word of command heard or misheard, or possibly not heard at all, which suggested to ears that were too ready to hear it a welcome retreat ; the retreat converted into a *sauve qui peut*, in which the 14th Dragoons remorselessly rode down our own guns and gunners and even those who were engaged in works of mercy behind them ; the colours of three regiments and four guns taken by the enemy ; the terrible total of 89 officers and 2,350 men killed or wounded—these are the chief incidents of the disastrous battle which in view, it is to be supposed, of the twelve guns which we had taken, the imagination of the Governor-General and the Commander-in-Chief endeavoured to convert, in their public despatches, into another victory, but which the Governor-General, in a private letter which lies before me, charac-

terises, together with its predecessors, as 'the lamentable succession of three unsatisfactory actions!' The facts were too strong for proclamations. The whole of India knew the truth, and those who can remember the mingled anxiety and indignation which the news of the 'victory of Chillianwallah' aroused in England, will remember also the sense of relief with which the supersession of the brave old soldier, but the reckless general, the Marcellus of our Sikh wars, was received by the English public.

Hitherto, the conduct of the war by the supreme civil and military authorities had given little cause for satisfaction. But there was another set of men, the founders of the Punjab school, the statesmen-soldiers, or soldier-statesmen, who, under the humble name of 'Assistants to the Resident,' had been stationed in outlying parts of the Punjab, and who, throughout this gloomy period, had gone far to retrieve the shortcomings of their superiors. What Herbert Edwardes had done in his district, and beyond it, has already been described.

But George Lawrence at Peshawur, James Abbott in Huzara, Herbert at the fort of Attock, Reynell Taylor in the Derajat, and John Lawrence in the Jullundur Doab—cut off, as most of them were, from all communication with the outer world, or served by troops on whom little dependence could be placed, and, all of them, surrounded by a vast native population whom they had hardly yet found time to know—held on to their posts with heroic courage, hoping to suppress or to postpone the general rising till the supreme authorities could be induced to recognise accomplished facts and take the field. We turn with pleasure from the mingled vacillation and rashness, from the divided command, from the orders and counter-orders, from the undecided battles, and from the victories that were no victories, of the highest authorities, to the resolution, the fearlessness, the energy, the clearness of vision, which marked each and all of these servants of the East India Company. These were the men, some of them connected by family ties, and all of them by ties of friendship, of common service, and of sympathy with the subject of this biography, who helped to make Chillianwallah bearable, and Gujerat possible. What they did, side by side with John Lawrence, in the second Sikh

war, seems like a preparation for what they or their successors were to do under him, nine years later, in the suppression of the Sepoy Mutiny. The one is a rehearsal for the other, as a brief narrative of what was done by the most conspicuous among them will show.

The force in the Jullundur Doab was small enough for the work that might be expected of it. At Jullundur itself there were four native and one European regiment, some Irregular horse and a battery of artillery. Besides these, there were small detachments of native troops, which were posted at various points of vantage, such as Hoshiarpore and Kangra; and—more important than all for John Lawrence's purpose, as they were immediately subject to him—there were two local corps of military police, one composed of Sikhs, the other of Hill-Rajpoots. This was the whole of the force available for the protection of the province; and even of this, a large portion was to be drawn off, in the course of the war, for military operations in the Bari Doab.

The first symptom of the rising storm showed itself in May—within a week or two, that is, of Agnew's murder. It came from beyond the frontier. Emissaries from Mooltan traversed the hill districts, calling on the chiefs to rise, and promising them the restoration of all their rights and privileges. At the same time, Bhai Maharaja Sing, a Guru who had been outlawed for a plot formed under the very eyes of the Resident at Lahore, using the influence which his sacred character gave him, collected together several hundred followers to the north of the Beas. His object, as his movements showed, was the invasion of the British territory. But the fords of the river were too well watched by its natural guardians. He beat a retreat towards the Chenab; he was there attacked by some Mussulmans, who had discovered that the British rule was preferable to the Sikh, was driven into the river, with hundreds of his followers, and was seen, so it was said, to disappear, with his famous black mare, beneath the waters. But a Guru was not fated to die like a dog! He bore a charmed life, and reappeared now here, now there, till he was ultimately taken, as we shall see hereafter, at Jullundur, by Vansittart.

Towards the end of August, a second inroad took place. Ram Sing, son of the Vizier of Nurpore, one of the small

hill states, put himself at the head of a band of marauders whom he had collected from the Jummo Hills, crossed the Ravi, seized the fort of Shahpore, proclaimed, with tattoo of drums, that the English rule had ceased, and took up a commanding position at Nurpore. Charles Saunders, Deputy-Commissioner at Hoshiarpore—'a cool judicious officer,' says John Lawrence, 'one of the best I have got'—was the first, with Fisher's Irregular Corps, to arrive at the spot, and he was soon followed by Barnes, Deputy-Commissioner at Kangra, and John Lawrence, the Commissioner, in person. More troops came up, and, a few days later, the position was stormed (Sept. 18, 1848), considerable booty was taken, and Ram Sing escaped with difficulty to the Sikh army encamped at Russool.

Meanwhile, though, as I have shown, the rebellion had been spreading throughout the Punjab, it had been met by no corresponding effort on the part of the highest authorities. November the 1st had been fixed, six months beforehand, as the day on which our campaign was to begin, and the rapid spread of the rebellion was no reason, in the opinion of the Governor-General and Commander-in-Chief, for changing their plan! The revolt of Shere and Chuttur Sing at opposite ends of the province, the consequent raising of the siege of Mooltan, the unopposed march northward of Shere Sing, and the imminent danger of Lahore, which, had he known its weakness, he might have taken then and there, had produced their natural effect. All the Sirdars but two joined the insurgents, and the whole of the open country was in their hands.

In November, news came that the frontier fort of Pathan-cote, which was garrisoned by only fifty Sikhs from Kangra and a few police, was being besieged by a thousand insurgents, who had been collected in the Bari Doab and Kashmere. The danger was urgent, for the fort was large and the garrison small. It had ammunition and supplies for five days only, and the garrison, composed as it was of Sikhs, might be disposed to hand over the fort at once to the enemy. By a night march, Barnes relieved the garrison and made the besiegers withdraw to Denanuggur, on the Sikh frontier; and by another night march, John Lawrence, —like Joshua, when summoned by the Gibeonites, under

circumstances of similar urgency,—marching ‘all night,’ crossed the Beas into the Punjab and attempted to surprise the rebels while they were still asleep. He arrived an hour too late, but followed them up with vigour and dispersed them. ‘The Sikh troops,’ he says in his report, ‘though they knew that they were going against Sikhs, evinced the greatest spirit and alacrity.’

It will be remembered that, unlike the inhabitants of the plains, who had not only acquiesced in but welcomed our rule, the hill chiefs were naturally more or less discontented with the loss of their ancient privileges; and the flame which had been smouldering, now burst out simultaneously in different directions. At the other extremity of the hill country, the Kutoch chief raised the standard of revolt, seized his ancestral palace at Teera and some adjoining forts, and fired a royal salute announcing the disappearance of the British Raj. At the same time the Raja of Jeswun, lower down in the hills, and the Raja of Duttarpore, and the Bedi of Oonah, from the plain country, rose up against us. Dividing his force into two parts, Lawrence sent Barnes, at the head of one of them, against the Kutoch chieftain, while he himself, with five hundred of the Sikh corps and four guns, moved down the Jeswun valley against the other insurgents. The success of both expeditions was complete. Barnes captured his opponent and the forts belonging to him. Lawrence did the same. Subdividing again the small force into two columns, with one of them, he captured a hill above Umb, held by the enemy; with the other, he destroyed the fort. Both Rajas fell into his hands.

The Bedi of Oonah might have proved a much more troublesome foe. He held large possessions both in the plains and in the hills, and was a man of considerable ambition and arrogance. He was, moreover, as I have shown, the high-priest of the Sikhs, being descended from Nanuk, the great Guru. This position he had won from his brother, whom he had slain in battle. Such a man could not fail to be hostile to us, and his opposition was intensified by the fact that we had set our faces against the practice, so dear to the Bedi, of female infanticide. Many of his people, however, refused to fight for him, and, on the advance of John Lawrence with a body of Sikhs who

seemed as ready to go against him as against the Rajas of the hills, he abandoned his stronghold and took refuge in the camp of Shere Sing. I may add that he shared in the privations and disasters of the subsequent campaign, surrendered to us at its close, and spent the rest of his life as a British pensioner at Umritsur.

The retreat of the Bedi into Sikh territory ended John Lawrence's campaign—a campaign of thirteen days only, but as complete, on a small scale, as any which was ever fought. A bloodless campaign is apt to escape the notice of an historian, for the very reasons which—if prevention is better than cure, and if to save life and money is better than to throw them away—ought to attract particular attention to it. From this time forward, not a gun was fired in the Jullundur Doab, not even when the echoes of the disastrous battle of Chillianwallah might well have roused it to one more effort ; and that this was so, was due chiefly to the skill, the energy, the intrepidity, the presence of mind of the Commissioner. With a mere handful of troops at his disposal, upon whose fidelity, till he had tested it in actual warfare, he could not safely count, he had taken measures to quell risings in the most opposite parts of his province, had organised his own commissariat, had kept the military authorities up to the mark, had carried on the civil government of the country, had led Sikhs against Sikhs, religious enthusiasts against their own high-priest ! In November of that memorable year, the scales seemed evenly balanced in the Punjab, or even to incline, as the result of the first three general engagements, in favour of the Sikhs. How much more desperate would the struggle have been, had the Jullundur Doab burst into a flame and threatened the flank and rear of our hard-pressed army ! Golab Sing, left to himself, and surrounded by the rebels, would, assuredly, have joined them, and, probably, at least one more Chillianwallah would have preceded Gujerat.

Such brilliant services could not fail to be noticed by the remarkable and masterful spirit who had succeeded Lord Hardinge as Governor-General, who was just throwing off the slight symptoms of hesitation which, on first landing, had made him defer to the judgment of others, and who was, henceforth, bent on showing everybody, perhaps only too

bluntly, that he could afford to stand alone. 'It was,' writes Lord Dalhousie to Henry Lawrence from Ferozepore, 'in order that no proclamation should be issued without being previously sanctioned by me, and in order to ensure unity of action by the Government and its officers, and to avoid differences of opinion, that I advanced to the verge of the frontier; and it is for this that I remain here now.'

The bunglings, the delays, and the disasters which had marked the opening of the campaign had not, it will readily be believed, taken place without causing many high words and much mutual recrimination between the fine old Commander-in-Chief and the young and self-reliant Governor-General. And a few extracts from the confidential letters of Lord Dalhousie to Henry Lawrence, which have been kindly entrusted to me by Henry Lawrence's surviving son, will help to fill a large gap which I find in Lord Lawrence's letters from October 1848 to September 1849, and will also serve to bring vividly before us one side (and I think the least lovable side) of the man who was henceforward to exercise so powerful an influence over the destinies of the Lawrence brothers. They will help to explain so much that is pleasant and so much that is painful in their subsequent relations to him that I have no scruple in inserting them here.

Henry Lawrence had gone, as I have related, to England on a year's leave, which was to be extended, if necessary for his health, to two. But the news of the outbreak at Mooltan determined him to return as soon as possible to his post. He left England in November, reached Bombay in December, hurried up to Mooltan, took part in the operations of the final siege, left it on January 9, brought the first news of the capture of the town—though not of the fort—to Lord Dalhousie, went on to the camp of the Commander-in-Chief, and was present, on the 13th, at the battle of Chillianwallah. His beneficent influence had made itself felt even before he arrived. The Sikhs had not been slow to remark that the outbreak had followed so soon after his departure, and they hoped that his return might be the signal for a pacification. This general belief in the *Ikbal* (prestige) of Henry Lawrence was, in itself, enough to arouse the spirit of Lord Dalhousie, to make him put his foot down,

and show his subordinate that, *Ikkal* or no *Ikkal*, it was Lord Dalhousie, and not Henry Lawrence, who would have the last word on each question as it came up. Nor can it be said that he was wrong in this. There had been rumours afloat that Moolraj intended to surrender to Sir Henry Lawrence as soon as he arrived, in the hope of getting more favourable terms from him than could be got from any one else. But a letter written on December 12 from Sirhind, by the Governor-General, and intended to meet Sir Henry Lawrence on his arrival, was calculated to remove all misconception on this point :—

I have to inform you that I will grant no terms whatever to Moolraj, nor listen to any proposal but unconditional surrender. If he is captured he shall have what he does not deserve—a fair trial; and if, on that trial, he shall prove the traitor he is, for months in arms against the British Government, or accessory to the murder of British officers, then, as sure as I live, he shall die. But you have one answer alone to give him now—unconditional surrender. I have told you what will follow it.

On January 18, five days after Chillianwallah, Henry Lawrence looked in upon his old quarters at Lahore, of which he was again to take charge as Resident on the 1st of the following month, and there, as the result of the 'victory' of Chillianwallah, he found the Brigadier in command talking of building up the gates and breaking down the bridges, to delay the onward march of the 'conquered' Sikhs !

You say you are grieved (says Lord Dalhousie to him) at all you saw and heard at Lahore; so am I—so I have long been; but I don't know whether our griefs are on the same tack.

In other letters from Ferozepore he writes :—

Never mind what other people say about your having authority over the Sutlej Provinces, or whether they like it or not. I think it expedient you should have it for the public good, and that's enough for anybody. Rub Colonel ——'s nose in the dirt if it's necessary. General —— is beyond all human patience and endurance. Pray coax or frighten Brigadier —— away.

The letter in which Lord Dalhousie, who had so lately



arrived in India and had never even seen the Punjab, severely reprimanded Henry Lawrence—not for a proclamation which he had issued on his own authority, but for the draft of one which he, with the full consent of the Governor-General, had prepared and then humbly submitted again to him for his approval, simply because he had inserted in it some slight expression of his personal feelings for a brave foe—has already been published, in great part, by Herman Merivale, in his life of Sir Henry Lawrence.\* It need not, therefore, be quoted again here. The reception of such a letter would have been gall and wormwood to a man of a far less sensitive and generous nature than Henry Lawrence, and it is painful to those who know what he had done and what he was, to read it even now.

A letter written by Lord Dalhousie to Henry Lawrence, on February 20, is so intensely characteristic of the man, shows so vividly his strength of mind, his strength of will, his strength of expression, and at the same time proves so clearly that the submission which he required from his subordinates he equally expected them, in their turn, to require from theirs, that I make no apology for quoting it almost in full :—

The tidings you send, on the whole, are satisfactory, and I pray God we may, for the sake of all, and for the peace of this country, have achieved a 'crowning' victory before long. I observe what you say regarding General Campbell (Sir Colin) having told you that there was 'no thought of crossing the Jhelum this season.' Your brother will have ere this reassured you on that point, which he incidentally mentioned to me. What 'thought' the camp of the Commander-in-Chief has signifies very little. The camp's business is to find fighting; I find thought; and such thought as the camp has hitherto found is of such d—d bad quality, that it does not induce me to forego the exercise of my proper functions. It is too late to enter to-night into the details of your letter. I will only say now generally, that the camp *will* cross the Jhelum this season, and, please God, the Indus also; that the Commander-in-Chief and General Thackwell, or the Departments, will not cross it; that General Gilbert will command, and I hope the job will be well done. All this I communicated to the Commander-in-Chief some time ago, authorising him, and requiring him, in the event of the opportunity presenting itself, to make the arrangements himself, and expedite matters as much as possible.

I am greatly surprised with what you write to me about Major

Edwardes, or rather, I should say I am greatly vexed, but not surprised at all. [Edwardes, it should be explained here, had disbanded a Pathan regiment, whose fidelity he had suspected, without any authorisation from Sir Henry Lawrence.] From the tone of your letter, I perceive it is not necessary to say that you should pull up Major Edwardes for this at once. But I further wish to repeat what I said before, that there are more than Major Edwardes in the Residency who appear to consider themselves, nowadays, as Governor-General at least. The sooner you set about disenchanting their minds of this illusion the better for your comfort and their own. I don't doubt you will find bit and martingale for them speedily. For my part, I will not stand it in quieter times for half-an-hour, and will come down unmistakably upon any one of them who may 'try it on,' from Major Edwardes, C.B., down to the latest enlisted general-ensign-plenipotentiary on the establishment. To-morrow I will write again.

Believe me,

Yours sincerely,

DALHOUSIE.

The admirers of Lord Dalhousie—and it must be admitted that these letters, incisive and racy, and often opportune, as they are, are not calculated to make anyone love him—and the admirers of Lord Gough, who, in spite of his blunders and vacillation, was, in virtue of his gallantry and martial bearing, beloved by his army, will, alike, reflect with pleasure that the Commander-in Chief, while he was the object of such unsparing sarcasm and animadversion, was preparing the way, by a careful exploration of the ground, and by a series of masterly movements, for as crowning a victory as ever smiled upon our arms in India. The battle of Gujerat was fought on February 21. With 20,000 men and a hundred guns, Lord Gough attacked the Sikhs, who were in a position chosen and fortified by themselves and numbered 50,000 men armed with sixty guns. Taught by bitter experience, or influenced, it may be, by the strong letters of Lord Dalhousie, which I have before me, he changed his tactics, and, with the help of the skilled advice of Sir John Cheape of the Engineers and Sir Patrick Grant, his son-in-law, kept himself and his men in check till the artillery, in which our real strength lay, had done its proper work. The Sikhs, even after their guns were silenced, fought like heroes, but they were utterly routed; and Gilbert, 'the best rider in India,' in a ride of many days, followed up the wreck of their army, till, at length, it surrendered with its guns,

its ammunition, and—more important than all in Lord Dalhousie's eyes—its English prisoners.

Few more striking scenes have ever been witnessed in India than this final submission of the Sikh army, the last remnant of the great Khalsa commonwealth. 'With noble self-restraint'—to use the words of Edwin Arnold—'thirty-five chiefs laid down their swords at Gilbert's feet, while the Sikh soldiers, advancing, one by one, to the file of the English drawn across the road, flung down tulwar, match-lock, and shield upon the growing heap of arms, salaamed to them as to the "spirit of the steel," and passed through the open line, no longer soldiers.' But it must have been a more touching sight still, when—as it has been described to me by eye-witnesses—each horseman among them had to part, for the last time, from the animal which he regarded as part of himself—from the gallant charger which had borne him in safety in many an irresistible charge over many a battlefield. This was too much even for Sikh endurance. He caressed and patted his faithful companion on every part of his body, and then turned resolutely away. But his resolution failed him. He turned back, again and again, to give one caress more, and then, as he tore himself away for the very last time, brushed a teardrop from his eye, and exclaimed in words which give the key to so much of the history of the relations of the Sikhs to us, their manly resistance, and their not less manly submission to the inevitable, 'Runjeet Sing is dead to-day !'

But Gilbert's task was not yet done. Pursuing his headlong career further still, he drove the Afghan contingent over the Indus, through Peshawur, and right up to the portals, the happily forbidding portals, of the Khyber. The battle of Gujerat thus brought to a close, not the campaign only but the war. All previous shortcomings were forgotten in the enthusiasm of victory, and the victor of Gujerat was able, with a good grace, to hand over the command to Sir Charles Napier, who had been sent out, in hot haste, to supersede him, and arrived from England early in May.

The whole of the Punjab, together with Peshawur and the Trans-Indus provinces, now lay at Lord Dalhousie's feet as the prize of victory ; and he was not the man to shrink, either on general or on special grounds, from appropriating

the prize. 'I take this opportunity,' he says in one of his State papers written a year or two later, 'of recording my strong and deliberate opinion, that, in the exercise of a sound and wise policy, the British Government is bound not to put aside or neglect such rightful opportunities of acquiring territory or revenue as may from time to time present themselves'—a sentence of death, just or unjust, necessary or unnecessary, expedient or inexpedient, upon how many native states! But, in the case of the Punjab, there could be no question about the justice, and little about the expediency or necessity, of applying the general rule. Twice the Sikhs had attacked us unprovoked, and, the second time, under circumstances which laid them open to the charge of treachery and ingratitude, as well as deadly hostility. The experiment of sustaining the Khalsa against its own internal weakness had been tried honestly, and under the most favourable circumstances, by Lord Dalhousie as well as by Lord Hardinge, by John as well as by Henry Lawrence, and it had failed. We had remained in the country, to begin with, against our own wishes, and only at the unanimous and urgent request of the Sirdars; and no sooner had we acceded to their importunity than they treacherously rose against us in arms, and, once again, by their enthusiasm, their discipline, and their valour, imperilled the safety of our Indian Empire.

Lord Dalhousie had made up his mind at an early point in the struggle as to what must be its ultimate result, and even so chivalrous a supporter of native states and rights as Henry Lawrence had always been; had not done more than meet his views with a half-hearted opposition. If he was disposed to deny the expediency, he was forced to admit the justice of annexation. John, with clearer views of what the safety of India required, thought it to be expedient as well as just. The two brothers, as I gather from the few papers relating to this time which I have before me, had been living together at Lahore since January. And when an interview between the Governor-General and the Resident was deemed necessary to arrange for the impending annexation, we can hardly wonder if the Resident, instead of going himself, preferred to send his brother John on an errand which must have been so distasteful to him. The momentous interview took place

at Ferozepore on March 12, and on the following day, after 'two long conversations,' John returned to Lahore, 'charged to convey to his brother the substance' of what they had been discussing, both as to Lord Dalhousie's intentions, and as to the mode of carrying them into execution. It was, I believe, the first time that Lord Dalhousie had set eyes upon the man who was so soon to become the most famous of all his lieutenants. But, drawing his conclusions from the vigour he had shown as Magistrate of Delhi during the first Sikh war, from the manner in which he had governed the Jullundur Doab in peace and in war, and from his correspondence with the Secretary to Government which he had seen and studied, he had already taken the measure of the man, and had begun to rate him at his proper value. 'What is to be done?' asked Lord Dalhousie, self-reliant and self-sufficing as he was, of the subordinate, whose advice he was hereafter so often to ask, and, even when the answer given did not harmonise with his previous views, he was not seldom to take—'what is to be done with the Punjab now?' and John Lawrence, who knew well that his questioner had made up his mind, at all hazards, ultimately to annex the conquered province, answered with characteristic brevity, 'Annex it now.' Difficulty after difficulty was started by the Governor-General, but as Demosthenes, when asked what was the first, the second, and the third requisite, of an orator, replied in one word, 'Action; action; action,' so John Lawrence met each difficulty as it was started with what he considered to be the best and the only sufficient method of meeting it—'Annex it now; annex it now; annex it now.' Immediate annexation would be easy while the people were still crushed by their defeat; it would anticipate the difficulties and dangers of the hot weather, which the last year had brought into such fatal prominence; finally, it would at once anticipate and clinch the determination of the Directors at home.

On March 29, Lord Dalhousie sent his Secretary, Sir Henry Elliot, to Lahore, charged to declare publicly his determination respecting the Punjab; and, on the following day, in presence of Sir Henry Lawrence, the Resident, and his brother John; in presence of the faithful remnant of the Sikh Durbar; in presence also of the young Maharaja, who took his seat, for the last time, on the throne of Runjeet

Sing, Elliot read aloud the fateful proclamation. The dynasty of Runjeet Sing was to be deposed ; the young Maharaja was to receive 50,000*l.* a year, and to have the right of residing wherever he liked, outside the limits of the Punjab, and the whole of the territories of the five rivers, together with the crown property and jewels, above all, the peerless Koh-i-noor, were to belong to the British. The proclamation was received by those present with silence and almost with indifference. It was a step fraught indeed with tremendous possibilities for good and evil. It overthrew the fondest hopes and the most generous aspirations of Henry Lawrence's life, but it was justified by what had gone before it, and the most resolute opponent of unnecessary annexations will admit that it has been more than justified by its results.

## CHAPTER XI.

THE WORK OF THE PUNJAB BOARD. 1849-1852.

THE Punjab had been annexed, but how was it to be governed? It might be placed under a purely military government, like that of Scinde—a system dear to the heart of the conqueror of Scinde, the self-willed and brilliant Sir Charles Napier, who was now on the point of landing in India as Commander-in-Chief, who despised all civilians as such, but reserved a special portion of his hatred, as well as scorn, for those 'soldier politicals' who, by doffing the red coat and donning the black, had shown that they deliberately chose the darkness rather than the light, and yet who—as even he could not deny—had gone far to make India what it was. Or, again, the precedent afforded by most of our earlier and more settled provinces might be followed; the Punjab might have a purely civil government, under the control of a trained civilian, whose primary object it would be, not to make it a stepping stone to further conquests beyond, but to prove to the East India Company that it could be well governed, and yet turn out to be a financial, as well as a military and political acquisition. This was the system which it might have been expected would have been preferred by a Governor-General who had never heard a shot fired till he reached the Sikh frontier, and who, it was then believed, cherished almost as great a dislike for military as did Sir Charles Napier for civil rule.

Was, then, Sir Charles Napier or Lord Dalhousie to have his way? Neither, and yet both. Both, that is, in part. The scheme upon which Lord Dalhousie hit, as the result of his personal knowledge of the men who had the best claim to

administer the annexed province, was as novel in the history of our Indian Empire as it was, at first sight, unpromising. The Punjab was to be governed, not by any one man, however eminent he might be, either as a soldier, or as a statesman, or as a mixture of both, but by a Board, the members of which were to be drawn from both branches of the service, and were to work under a system of 'divided labour, but of common responsibility.'

The Board was to consist of three members. At the head of it, as of prescriptive right, came the man who had filled the highest post in the country before its annexation, first as Resident, and then, as he might almost be called, Regent—the chivalrous and high-spirited, the eager and indefatigable, Henry Lawrence. That he was appointed to the first place in the administration of the new province is almost as creditable to a man of the autocratic tendencies of Lord Dalhousie as to Henry Lawrence himself. The friend and mentor of Lord Hardinge had already had many a sharp brush with Lord Hardinge's successor, and there was an antagonism of nature between the two men which each must have felt that no amount of mutual forbearance could bridge over. But Lord Dalhousie, as I have shown, was able to respect and to trust those from whom he differed, if he knew that they had the root of the matter in them. And he was certainly not the man to pass over, on the score of mere incompatibility of temperament, the pre-eminent claims which Henry Lawrence's previous services, his knowledge of the Sikhs, and his influence over them gave him.

Next to Henry Lawrence on the Board, in point of influence, if not of seniority, and marked out for it by his family name, and by his services in the Delhi district, in the Jullundur Doab, and at Lahore itself, came Henry Lawrence's brother, John. His knowledge of the Sikh races was only less than that of his brother; while, in mastery of details, in financial skill, in power of continuous work, and in civil training generally, he was far superior to him. A man who had ruled the Jullundur Doab during the last two years in the way in which John Lawrence had ruled it, and with the results which the prolonged and doubtful struggle of the second Sikh war had brought into full relief, was clearly the man to have a potential voice in the rule of



the four other Doabs which the fortune of war had now thrown into our hands.

But a Board must consist of more than two members, and Charles Greville Mansel, the third member invited to serve upon it, was a man of more equable and philosophic temperament than either of the Lawrences. Like John, he was a civilian who had served his apprenticeship in the best school then known in India—that of Mertins Bird and Thomason, in the North-West. He was a man of contemplation rather than of action, and it was perhaps well that he was so ; for the two brothers—with all their high mental gifts—were pre-eminently men of action. Mansel thus served as a foil to them both, in a different sense from that in which they served as a foil to each other. He was admirably fitted to discover the weak points in any course of action which was proposed, and, with somewhat irritating impartiality, would argue with John in favour of Henry's views, and with Henry in favour of John's.

The balance between the civil and military elements aimed at by Lord Dalhousie in the construction of the Board itself, was scrupulously observed also in the selection of those who were to work under it. Besides George Christian, the Secretary, upon whom John Lawrence had long fixed his eye, and Melvill, who was specially appointed by Lord Dalhousie to the post of Assistant-Secretary, there were to be four Commissioners for the four Divisions of the new province—Lahore, Jhelum, Mooltan, and Leia ; while beneath them, again, came some fifty-two Deputy and Assistant Commissioners, who were selected in as nearly as possible equal numbers from the civil and military services. ' You shall have,' wrote Lord Dalhousie to Henry Lawrence, in anticipation of the annexation, on February 26, ' the best men in India to help you—your brother John to begin with.' And he was as good as his word.

The first and one of the most difficult tasks which lay before the Board was the pacification of the country. The greater portion, indeed, of those gallant foes who had made us tremble for our empire at Ferozeshuhr and Chillianwallah had frankly recognised that our star was in the ascendant after the battle of Gujerat, and, on March 12, as I have already shown, had thrown down their swords in one vast pile,

and had each, with two rupees in his pocket, returned to the plough whence he had originally come. It was now the turn of the few who had remained faithful to us during the struggle. Obedient to our summons, they mustered, together with the armed retinues of the old Sikh nobility, at Lahore. The old and invalided among them were pensioned off. The remainder obtained their long arrears of pay, and permission was given them, of which they were eventually to avail themselves largely, to re-enter our service.

We had thus disbanded the Sikh army. It remained to disarm the population and so to deprive them of the temptation to violent crime and disorder which the possession of arms always gives. The wearing of arms, as the history of Eastern Europe still shows, is a privilege as dearly prized by a semi-civilized as by a barbarous people, and is often necessary for the safety of the wearer. But peace, profound peace, was henceforward, as we hoped, to reign in the Punjab. Accordingly, about six weeks after annexation, a proclamation ordering a general disarmament was everywhere placarded, and, strange to say, was everywhere obeyed. One hundred and twenty thousand weapons of every size and species, some of them much more dangerous to the wearer than to his foe, and ranging from the cannon or the rifle of the nineteenth century A.D., down to the quoit or the bows and arrows of the time of Porus and Alexander in the fourth century B.C., were voluntarily surrendered. The mountaineers of Huzara and of the Trans-Indus frontier were the only exceptions to the rule. They were allowed, and were not only allowed but enjoined, to retain their arms; for to have disarmed them, at this early period, would have been to lay them a defenceless prey at the feet of their neighbours across the border.

The duty of protecting the country which had been thus deprived of the natural guardians—or disturbers—of its peace, fell, as a matter of course, on the conquerors. To guard the dangerous frontier line it was arranged that ten regiments—five of cavalry and five of infantry—should be raised from the country itself; and people of various races—Hindustanis, Punjabis, and Mussulmans—responded cheerfully to the call. The Sikhs, it had been feared, might

flock in dangerously large numbers to our standards. But it was they alone who hung back ; and, for the moment, it seemed as though, contrary to all our principles, we should be obliged to hold the Punjab in check by a force from which the bravest of its inhabitants were practically excluded. This danger soon passed by. The Sikhs threw off their scruples, and, since then, they have rendered us valiant service whenever and wherever they have been called upon to do so.

Within a year of their being raised, several of the Punjab irregular regiments shed their blood in our service, and, henceforward, they were seldom to shed it in any other cause. The Afridis, the Swattis, and other turbulent tribes beyond the frontier, learned that their more peaceable neighbours within it had now a formidable power behind them which could not be provoked with impunity, and began to put some check on their predatory propensities. Three horse field-batteries, a camel corps stationed at Dera Ismael Khan, and the famous 'Guide Corps,' completed the movable defences of the frontier.

But the 'Guide Corps' was so remarkable a body of men, and they will have to be so often mentioned hereafter, that it will be well to give at once some notion of their leading characteristics. The corps owed its origin to a suggestion thrown out by the fertile brain of Henry Lawrence, at the close of the first Sikh war. Originally it consisted of only two hundred and eighty men, horse and foot. But, in view of the increased duties which were now to be thrown upon it, its numbers were to be trebled. No more uncanny, and yet no more invaluable, body of men was ever got together. Like the Carthaginian army of old, which contained samples of every nation that the ubiquitous fleets of the great republic could reach, the Guide Corps contained, on a small scale, representatives of almost every race and every place, every language and every religion, which was to be found in the North and North-West of India. It contained men of every shade of moral character, and men of no character at all. The most cunning trackers, the most notorious cattle-lifters, the most daring freebooters were enrolled in it, were subjected to a wholesome but not an over-strict discipline, were clothed in a brown uniform, so as to be indistinguish-

able, at a little distance, from the ground on which they moved, were privileged to receive a high rate of pay, and, within a very short space of time, were found to be ready 'to go anywhere or do anything.' 'Ready, aye ready!' might well have been their motto. Endurance, courage, sagacity, local knowledge, presence of mind—these were the qualities which marked a man out for the Guide Corps. On whatever point of the five hundred miles of our western frontier, with its score or more of savage tribes, operations had to be carried on, there were always to be found amongst the Guides men who could speak the language of the district in question, men who had threaded before, and, therefore, could now thread again, its most dangerous defiles, and could tell where the hostile encampment or the robber-haunted cavern lay. Thus the Guides, in a new but not an untrue sense of the word, formed the 'Intelligence Department' of the Punjab. These were the men for a daring reconnaissance, for a forced march, for a forlorn hope. Raised first by Lieutenant Harry Lumsden, they had already done good service in border fighting and in the second Sikh war. They were soon to serve under Sir Colin Campbell against the Mohmunds, and their like, with unvarying success. Finally, they were to be the first of that splendid succession of reinforcements of which the Punjab was to denude itself in the day of peril and send with a God speed down to Delhi. 'I am making,' said Henry Daly, their commander, as he started with alacrity on his honourable mission, 'and I intend to make, the best march that has been heard of in India.' And he was as good as his word. In twenty-two days, at the very hottest season of the year, he made a forced march of five hundred and eighty miles from Peshawur to Delhi; and his men came into camp, as they were described by an eye-witness, 'as firm and light of step as if they had marched only a mile.' What wonder that they were received with ringing cheers by the small besieging force, and were welcomed, not merely for what they were in themselves—a body which represented the loyalty and the energy of nearly every tribe of Upper India—but as an earnest of the reinforcements which the Punjab, with John Lawrence at the helm, and with such supporters as Montgomery, Nicholson, Edwardes, Chamberlain, and

half a dozen other such at his side, was to pour forth, in quick succession, on the same hazardous errand ?

The whole frontier force which I have described, was, after long discussion, made directly subject to the Board, and was placed under the command of Brigadier Hodgson. One portion, and only one, of the frontier line was deemed by Lord Dalhousie to be of such paramount importance for the protection of the Empire that it was reserved for the regular troops. This was the Peshawur Valley, which—with the Khyber, the direct passage to Afghanistan, and thence into Central Asia, in its front, and with the passage of the Indus directly in its rear—was to be guarded by a force of about 10,000 men, nearly 3,000 of them Europeans. The Board had already shown by its measures that it was alive to the truth of the Greek saying that 'men, and not walls, make a city ;' but the number of men at their disposal was too small, the hostile mountains were too near, sometimes not a couple of miles from our boundary, to allow of such a merely Spartan rampart as was possible in other parts of our Indian frontier. Accordingly, they arranged that the most dangerous portion, from Huzara to Dera Ismael Khan, should be defended by forts of considerable size, which were to be rendered capable of standing a siege ; that, below these, again, from the Tonk Valley down to Scinde, there should be a chain of smaller fortified posts at intervals of twelve miles apart ; and that the whole should be connected together by a good military road, with branches leading, on one side, towards the hostile mountains, and, on the other, towards the friendly river.

The country having been disarmed, and the frontier rendered secure, the next object of the Board was to provide for the detection and prevention of crime. To meet these ends, they raised two large bodies of police, the one preventive with a military organisation, the other detective. The preventive police were 8,000 in number, horse and foot, many among whom had done good service to the late Durbar, and had remained faithful to us in the Sikh war. Their duty was to furnish guards for treasuries, jails, and outposts, to patrol the roads—as much as there should be any roads to patrol—and to follow up gangs of marauders, should any such appear or reappear in the nearly pacified province.

The other body, numbering 7,000 men, and divided amongst some 230 police districts (thannahs), was to be employed in the detection of crime, in the guarding of ferries, and in the collecting of supplies for troops or of boats for the passage of the rivers.

With a wise trustfulness in its instruments, the Board left to the native revenue collectors, called *tahsildars*, large powers in the way of organising and controlling these police, thus utilising the local knowledge which they, and they alone, possessed. The native village watchmen, who formed an integral part of the old village system and were paid by the villagers themselves, were also carefully maintained by officers who had learned the priceless value of the village communities in the North-West.

Cattle-stealing was by no means the worst crime with which the Board had to deal. Dacoity, or robbery in gangs, had been bound up with the whole course of Punjab history. The Sikhs had been cradled in it; it had grown with their growth; and, as in many analogous periods of European history, it was the most successful gang robber who, after winning by his trusty sword large quantities of money or of cattle, usually ended by carving out for himself, in much the same manner, broad estates or powerful principalities. The leader of a band of free-lances had thus little reason to be ashamed of his occupation. The bluest blood to be found in the Punjab often flowed in his veins, and his profession did as much honour to him as he to his profession. Kept within bounds by the strong hand of Runjeet Sing, or rather given ample-occupation by his foreign conquests, Dacoity had taken a new lease of life in the anarchy which followed his death; and when his army was finally broken up by us, it was only natural that the bolder spirits who could not, or would not, enter our service, should betake themselves to so time-honoured a practice. The districts of Lahore and Umritsur began to swarm with them. But strong precautions and wholesome severity soon checked the evil. During the first year, thirty-seven Dacoits were condemned to death in Umritsur alone; in the second year, the number fell to seven; and, in a few years more, the crime ceased to exist throughout the Punjab.

But there was a more insidious crime, the existence of

which seems, at first, to have been quite unsuspected in the Punjab. The prevalence of Thuggee in other parts of India had only been discovered a few years previously. But the weird practices connected with it, the religious initiation, the patient plotting, the cool cruelty, the consummate skill, and the professional enthusiasm of the actors, had already given to it a world-wide celebrity. Colonel Sleeman had tracked its mysteries through all their windings, and Colonel Meadows Taylor has, since then, laid them bare to the world in a well-known story, which does not overstate the facts of the case.

The discovery of corpses by the side of wells or in the jungles, after the Dacoits had pretty well been exterminated, first aroused a suspicion that other confraternities of death might be found within our limits. Dead men tell no tales, and the Thugs of Hindustan had been much too skilful ever to leave their work half-done. No half-throttled traveller had ever escaped from their hands to tell the tale of the fellow-travellers who had joined him on his road, had wormed themselves into his confidence, had questioned him of his welfare, and then, as he sat at food with them by the wayside, had with one twist of the fatal handkerchief, attempted to give him a short shrift. But the Punjab Thug was a mere bungler in his business. The fine art had only recently been imported into his country from Hindustan, and its first professor had been discovered and straightway hung up by Runjeet Sing. His successors often made up for their want of skill in the use of the handkerchief, by hacking their victim to pieces with their swords, and then, instead of pitching his body, still warm, into the grave which they had opened while he was talking to them, they would carelessly leave it to rot by the wayside. At last a Brahmin, who had been two-thirds strangled and left for dead, recovered and told his tale. The clue was followed up. Rewards were offered for the detection of Thugs, a free pardon was promised to those who might turn Queen's evidence, and a special officer was appointed for the investigation. A list of recent victims, two hundred and sixty-four in number, was soon given in by approvers. A second list of professional Thugs, given in by the same authorities, was published and posted everywhere. Many of these were

apprehended, and their confessions taken. Others disappeared altogether. The approver would often conduct the British officer for miles through the jungle without any apparent clue which could guide him in his search or refresh his memory. 'Dig here,' 'Dig there,' he would say, as he came to a sudden stop in his tortuous course; and the turning up of a few spadefuls of soil revealed the corpse or the skeleton of one of his victims. Along one bit of by-path fifty-three graves were thus opened and were all found to be tenanted. One Thug was questioned as to the number of his victims. His professional pride was touched, and with true enthusiasm he replied, 'How can I tell? Do you remember, Sahib, every animal you have killed in the chase! Thuggee is our sport, our *shikar*!' \*

The Thugs of the Punjab were found to belong chiefly to the Muzbi or sweeper caste. They were as superstitious as they were bungling and cruel. A cry of a bird or beast of ill-omen could turn from its purpose a heart which no pang of pity or of remorse could ever reach. A thousand of these Muzbis paid, within a few years, the penalty of their misdeeds. They had been treated by the Sikhs as outcasts, and it is little wonder if they soon became so. It was the object of the Punjab Board, if they could not overcome the sentiment which lay at the bottom of the caste feeling, at least to make the existence of those miserable creatures more tolerable, and, by a strict system of supervision and of employment, to turn them into decent members of society. They were employed for several years to come on those two great material triumphs of the Punjab Administration, to be described hereafter—the Bari Doab Canal and the Grand Trunk Road. And, in the Mutiny, when a cry was raised at Delhi for sappers and miners, it was these selisame outcasts who were selected by John Lawrence for the purpose, and who did admirable service to our cause both at Delhi and at Lucknow. To have reclaimed these men, and to have put down for ever, in a marvellously short space of time, two such evils as Dacoity and Thuggee, is no slight credit to the Punjab Board, and no slight gain to the cause of humanity.

As regards legislation, the customs of the natives were,

\* Arnold's *Dalhousie*, vol. i. p. 259.



as far as possible, taken as the basis of the law. The Board knew well, as one of the sages of antiquity has remarked, that 'good customs are of even greater importance than good laws,' in fact, that the one are only efficacious in so far as they are the outcome and the representative of the other. Accordingly, a code of native customs was drawn up. Those which were absolutely bad and seemed to be incapable of improvement were forbidden. Those which related to marriage and divorce, and tended, as they do in most Eastern countries, to the degradation of the female sex, were, first, modified and then accepted. Those which related to such subjects as inheritance and adoption were incorporated at once. The *Tahsildars*, whose local knowledge marked them out as the best judges of local matters of small importance, were confirmed in their judicial, as they had already been in their police authority. Each village, or group of adjoining villages, thus retained a court of its own sanctioned by immemorial custom, and though the right of appeal to the Deputy-Commissioner was reserved, yet a large portion of all matters in dispute could always be settled within its precincts. It should be added, that the English officers of all grades were bound by the spirit rather than by the letter of the regulations, and all acted on the principle so dearly cherished in the East, that, if it is not possible to eliminate all mistakes in the administration of justice, it is at least possible to avoid undue delays.

But none of these reforms could be accomplished without a proper settlement of the revenue, and in particular of that item on which it mainly depends—the land-tax. The land-tax is that varying share of the produce of the soil which is claimed by Government as its own. Under native governments it is generally paid in kind, and is levied, harvest by harvest, by ill-paid officials, who are apt to take too little from the cultivator if he bribes them sufficiently, too much if he does not. And, in either case, a large part of the amount, instead of finding its way into the coffers of the State, stops short in the pocket of the tax-gatherers. Under the system introduced by the English, a low average of the produce of a district was taken on the returns of several years together, and then the money value of the Government share was taken at another low average of current

prices. All parties gained by this arrangement, but, most of all, the cultivator himself. The saving was great in every way; for the estimate was taken once in ten, twenty, or thirty years, instead of twice or three times in one year, while extortion and other abuses were rendered almost impossible. If the English Government had conferred no other benefit on India than this, it would have done much to justify its existence.

The varieties of land tenure were numerous and complicated, but they were time-honoured; and it was the honourable mission of the Board, in no case, to destroy, but only to revivify and to preserve. The land-tax had, in Runjeet's time, amounted to half the gross produce, and had, generally, been paid in kind. This payment in kind—not without strong protests on the part of the tax-payers—was abolished by us, and its amount reduced to a half or to a quarter of what it had been before. Nor did the State suffer much by the remission, for the revenues of Mooltan, which had become an integral part of the Punjab, and of other outlying parts, were flowing freely into our Treasury, and our receipts were further swollen by the abolition of the illicit profits of the tax-collectors, and by the confiscation of the property of rebellious jagheerdars.

The financial policy of the Board was liberal throughout. The forty-seven articles taxed by the lynx-eyed Runjeet had already been cut down to twenty by Henry Lawrence; but to secure the payment even of this diminished number of duties, it had been found necessary to retain Runjeet's cordon of preventive lines all round the frontier. Transit duties and tolls had been levied by Runjeet at every possible point within the Punjab. A piece of merchandise crossing the country had to pay duty some twelve times over! On January 1, 1850—only ten months, that is, after annexation—all town and transit dues, all export and import duties, were swept away. The preventive frontier line was abolished, and trade was left free to flow in its natural channels. To balance these reductions, an excise, desirable in every point of view, was levied on spirits; stamp duties were introduced; tolls at the chief ferries over the large rivers were authorised; and a tax—necessary under the circumstances, but not theoretically free from objection, since it was laid on

a necessity of life—was imposed on salt. The vast stores of this mineral to be found in the Salt range were, henceforward, to be managed by Government itself; and to render the revenue accruing from it secure, the importation of salt from all neighbouring districts was prohibited. It was the one blot on an otherwise excellent fiscal system. But the natives did not object to it, and found it no burden.

If the prosperity of the country did not seem to increase with a bound, as the result of all these arrangements, it was not the fault of the Government but of circumstances which were beyond its control. There were three rich harvests after annexation. The soldiers of the Khalsa betook themselves to the plough or to the spade; and agriculture, encouraged by the lowered land-tax, and by the peace and security of the country, spread over tracts which had never before been broken up. There was thus a glut of agricultural produce in the markets, while there was, as yet, no ready means of disposing of it. The cultivators found difficulty in paying even the reduced land-tax. A cry arose for further remissions, and under a Government which was generous, but not lavish, it was a cry that was not raised in vain. Thus, the discontent which was the accidental result of the improved condition of the country tended to make the inhabitants more prosperous still. Happy the country and happy the people that were in such a case!

As regards education, the work of the first three years was chiefly preparatory. The first thing to be done was to ascertain what steps had been taken by natives in that direction; and Robert Montgomery—a name mentioned here for the first time in connection with the Punjab, but henceforward almost as closely bound up with it as that of the Lawrences themselves—threw himself into the work with alacrity. To his surprise and pleasure, it was discovered that, throughout the Punjab, there were elementary schools for all classes, Sikh, Mussulman, and Hindu; that the agricultural classes, unlike those of other parts of India, resorted to them in at least as large numbers as the higher castes, Rajpoots, Brahmins, or Khuttries; and, more remarkable still, that even female education, which is quite unknown in other parts of the peninsula, was not altogether neglected. In Lahore, for instance, there were sixteen

schools for girls, with an average of six scholars in each, and, what is still more noteworthy, all of them were Muslims. In fact, there was a general desire for education. The standard aimed at in these native schools was, of course, not high. The staple of the education was the reading and recitation of the sacred volume accepted by each creed, supplemented by a little writing and arithmetic—enough, at all events, to enable the Sikh to calculate his compound interest with accuracy, and to make him a good village accountant. The buildings were of the most primitive kind. A temporary shed or tent, or the enclosure of some mosque or temple, sufficed for the purpose. Sometimes there was nothing but the shade of a spreading tree. The stipend of the teacher was precarious enough, and was eked out by presents of grain or sweetmeats from the pupils or their parents. The members of the Board were unable, at this early date, to elaborate any extensive educational schemes, but they scrupulously respected all existing educational endowments, and they proposed to found a central school in each city of the Punjab. That at Umritsur was of a more ambitious character. It was to be divided into as many departments as there were religions or languages in the country. By the end of the second year after annexation it contained 153, and at the end of the fourth year 308, scholars. A race of young Punjabis, it was hoped, were thus being trained up who might be trusted with the more or less important posts under Government which were then in the hands of Hindustanis.

It only remains to be added that the Punjab 'paid : ' an all-important consideration this, when we bear in mind the poverty of the inhabitants of India. It is, of course, true that the balance-sheet of a great empire is not always to be scrutinised as though it were the balance-sheet of a commercial firm, and that a heroic disregard of finance may occasionally prove, in the end, to be not only the truest wisdom but the best economy. But, owing to the exertions of the Board, and in an especial degree, it must be added, to the financial genius of John Lawrence, the administration of the Punjab—even when the task before it was nothing less than the reconstruction of the whole country, and when that reconstruction was proceeding at a railroad pace

—could stand the strictest of commercial tests. Not to speak of the balance-sheets of the first three years, which showed a surplus of fifty-two, sixty-four, and seventy lacs of rupees respectively—for this surplus was, in part, the result of the confiscation of jagheers, and of the sale of State property—in the fourth year, when these exceptional receipts had almost disappeared and the colossal expense of the Grand Trunk Road and the Great Canal had begun to make itself felt, there was still a surplus of fifty-three lacs. The Board did not disguise from themselves or from their superiors that, in the spirit of a munificent and far-seeing landlord, they contemplated an ever-increasing expenditure during the next ten years on these public works. But, with just confidence, they held that such an expenditure would be reproductive, and that, even during the ten years of leanness which must precede many decades of plenty, there would still be a surplus of twelve lacs per annum. These anticipations, however sanguine they might seem, were justified by the result. Constant reductions were made in the land settlement, and yet the revenue went on increasing. The 134 lacs of revenue of the year of annexation (1849) had risen, by the year of the mutiny (1857), to 205 lacs. In that year of agony, the Chief Commissioner not only raised this large sum by methods which are usually practicable only in the time of peace, but was actually able from the surplus to send off twenty lacs in hard cash to Delhi!

It was to little purpose that the critics of the Punjab administration pointed to the large army of 50,000 men stationed within the limits of the province, and insisted that the whole expense attending it should be charged to the Punjab account; for Lord Dalhousie triumphantly retorted that the military force which would have been required if our frontier had still been the Sutlej, would not have been appreciably less than that which was required to defend the line of the Suliman mountains. It was only the excess—an excess consisting, as he pointed out, of not more than two European regiments—which could fairly be charged to the Punjab accounts.

## CHAPTER XII.

HENRY AND JOHN LAWRENCE. 1849-1852.

IN the present chapter I purpose, so far as it is possible to do so, to bring out what is more personal and domestic in the life of John Lawrence during the period of the Board (from March 1849 to January 1853), and to lay stress on his individual work. It is, in one respect, the most painful period of his life, for it deals with the severance—the inevitable and irrevocable severance—of two brothers, who were as able, as high-minded, as devoted to duty and to each other, as, perhaps, any two brothers ever were. But it is a subject which I am not at liberty to shirk. Happily, there is no temptation to suppress aught that is necessary to the understanding of either of the two brothers. The characters of each will be brought out into strong relief. Neither of them will be found to be free from faults; and what I imagine those faults to have been, I shall endeavour to indicate, as both brothers would have wished their biographers to do, without fear and without favour. But there is nothing which need shrink from the light of day, or which, however painful, is discreditable to either. The great light which is said to beat upon a throne and blacken every blot, will find nothing to blacken here.

The last glimpse we obtained of John Lawrence in the quiet of his own family, if such a word as quiet can ever be used of his toilsome life, was in March 1848, when, having rid himself, at last, of his troublesome 'acting' post at Lahore, he returned, with his wife and children, to his own Commissionership of Jullundur, hoping, in the cool hill-station of Dhurmsala, to enjoy a brief period of comparative rest and domestic life.

The news of the murder of Agnew and Anderson at Mooltan, and the dull rumbling of the impending storm in the Punjab, soon called John Lawrence to more stirring scenes. He left his wife and family behind him, warning them to be ready, on the receipt of a message from him, to come down with all speed to a place of safety on the plains. It was a pleasant spot, this Dhurmsala; and the hill people around it, the Gudis, were simple and lovable, as a trifling but touching incident of one of the earlier visits of the Lawrences to the place will show. John Lawrence had been called off to Lahore, to help his brother, and as his wife was the only European left in the small hill-station, he had spoken, before his departure, to the headman of a neighbouring village, begging him to look after her, and see that the family had no difficulty in getting what they required. The old man came often to see her, dressed in the peculiar costume of the hill people, a large loose coat fastened by a belt round the waist, and out of its capacious hollow he used to produce various offerings in the shape of cucumbers or Indian corn, and, now and then, a live fowl or lamb. He took great interest in her welfare and was always most kind and courteous. Thinking that she was unhappy in her quiet life, he wrote privately to her husband at Lahore to say that she looked so melancholy, always walking about with her head down, that he advised him to return to her as soon as possible. Otherwise she might be turned into a pheasant and be seen no more!

But even the attentions of the trusty Gudi could hardly have made Dhurmsala a safe place of residence for Mrs. John Lawrence during the summer of 1848. For many of the hill chieftains around were preparing to rise, and a hasty message from her husband warned her to make the best of her way to the hill fort of Kangra, where his brother Richard would help her. With her four young children and her English maid, she left the little village. Kangra was only twelve miles distant, but the journey was not an easy one and took many a long hour to accomplish. They were obliged to travel in what are now well known as *jampans*, a sort of chair carried by bearers. There were several heavily swollen streams to be crossed, and here the *jampans* were carried on the heads of the bearers instead of

on their shoulders, while a second set of men walked alongside, helping them to hold their loads aloft. Before evening, the travellers arrived within the walls of the Kangra fort, and were, soon afterwards, summoned by other messages from John Lawrence to Hoshiarpore and Jullundur. Here he had taken a house for her, and here she passed the winter in the company of her sister-in-law, Mrs. Burton, whose husband was with his regiment throughout the Chillianwallah campaign. During the winter, John Lawrence, who was also with the troops in the numerous small expeditions which I have described, managed occasionally to visit her. But, early in the spring, he was summoned to Lahore to meet his brother Henry, who had just then returned from England.

At the end of March, the formal annexation of the Punjab took place, and John found himself, not altogether to his satisfaction, as his letters show, installed a member of the new governing Board. The hot weather was rapidly coming on and the Residency, as it has been described to me by those who have a good right to speak, was the busiest of all busy scenes. Some fifty officers and their families, arriving from various parts of India, and despatched with all haste through the roadless and still disturbed country to their various destinations; the Lawrences and their secretaries working, as we may well believe, full sixty minutes to every hour; every room and every bed in the Residency and the adjoining houses filled or over-filled, and crowds everywhere!

The Board met, and infinite were the number and variety of the subjects calling for immediate attention. On Sir Henry Lawrence, as the President, naturally devolved what is called in India the 'political,' as distinguished from the 'civil,' work of the annexed province. He was the recognised medium of communication with the Supreme Government, and the racy and incisive letters of Lord Dalhousie, now before me, written to him day by day, and, sometimes, two or three on the same day, during the months which preceded and followed the annexation, give a pretty clear idea, in the absence of other documents, of the multifarious duties which fell, in the first instance, on him as President, and, afterwards, on the other members of the Board. The



disbanding and then the partial re-enrolment of the Sikh army; the disarmament of the people; the treatment of the fallen Sirdars; the raising of Irregulars; the selection of military stations with gardens for the troops; the arrangements for the Guides and Engineers; the dismissal of Captain Cunningham by the Directors for the publication of his able and honest—too honest—history of the Sikhs; the trial of Moolraj; the care of the young Maharaja; the escape of the Maharani; the safe custody of the Crown jewels (of which more anon); the Afridi troubles, 'a plaguy set,' as Lord Dalhousie calls them; the preparation to receive the onslaught of Sir Charles Napier on the whole system of the administration of the Punjab,—these are but a fraction of the subjects with which Lord Dalhousie's letters deal, and which would come before John Lawrence as a member of the Board, though the initiative would rest not with him, but with his brother.

John Lawrence's own immediate duties were connected with the civil administration, and especially with the settlement of the land revenue. This was the work for which his admirable civil training had especially fitted him. He was now to reap the appropriate reward—a reward not of repose, but of redoubled work and responsibility—for those long years which he had spent almost alone among the dusky myriads of Paniput and Gurgaon, Etawa and Delhi. It was now that his knowledge of all classes of the natives, acquired, as it only could be acquired, by the closest intimacy with them, stored up in the most retentive of memories, and never allowed to rust for want of use—was to be called into abundant requisition. The 'mysteries' of the revenue survey and of the revision of the settlement were no mysteries to him, for he had long since been brought face to face with the difficulties which they suggested, and had been able, in great measure, to overcome them.

And, indeed, there was enough to be done in the Punjab to tax all this experience, all this energy, and all this enthusiasm to the utmost. Differences of opinion between the brothers on matters of policy soon began to reveal themselves, or rather were brought into greater prominence by the fact that they were now, for the first time, sitting on equal terms at the same council table. These differences

had never been disguised. On the contrary, they had been fully recognised by each, as the letters of John Lawrence to his brother, which I have already quoted, show. But while John had been merely 'acting' for Henry at Lahore, he had, of course, set himself loyally to carry out his views, especially where they most differed from his own. Moreover, the questions between them respecting jagheers, the privileges and position of the native aristocracy, and the like, had been theoretical rather than practical, so long as the annexation of the Punjab was only looming in the distance and had not become a thing of the past. But now the decree had gone forth; the questions referred to had come within the range of practical politics; and the differences began to be more vital. Each brother had a quick temper, though Henry's was the least under control of the two; each had a clear head and a firm will; each had an equal voice at the Board; and each was fully convinced of the expediency and justice of the view which he himself held. But these were only the first mutterings of an explosion which might be postponed for many a month or year—possibly, might never break forth at all—and some of the earlier meetings of the volcanic Board seem to have been amusing enough.

Here is a sample. Shortly before the decree of annexation went forth, Lord Dalhousie had written to Henry Lawrence to make every disposition for the safe custody of the State jewels which were about to fall into the lap of the English. And, writing to him again on April 27, on the subject of the Maharani, who had just escaped from our hands, he remarks:—'This incident, three months ago, would have been inconvenient. Now, it does not so much signify. At the same time, it is discreditable, and I have been annoyed by the occurrence. As guardians seem so little to be trusted, I hope you have taken proper precautions in providing full security for the jewels and Crown property at Lahore, whose removal would be a more serious affair than that of the Maharani.' It had, in fact, been found more than once, on the enrolment of some new province in our Empire, which, whether by cession, by lapse, or by forcible annexation, was growing, or about to grow, so rapidly, that the State jewels or money had had a knack of disappearing. It is amusing, in the correspondence before me, to read the expressions of

virtuous indignation which bubble over from our officers at the extravagance, or rapacity, or carelessness of the former owners, when on entering a palace, which they deemed would be stocked with valuables ready for English use, they found that the treasury was empty and the jewels were gone. Great care was, therefore, needful, especially as among the Punjab jewels was the matchless Koh-i-noor, the 'mountain of light,' which it was intended should be expressly surrendered by the young Maharaja to the English Queen.

The origin of this peerless jewel is lost in the mists of legendary antiquity. It had fallen into the hands of the early Turkish invaders of India, and, from them, it had passed to the Moguls. 'My son Humayoun,' says the illustrious Baber, one of the most lovable of all Eastern monarchs, 'has won a jewel from the Raja which is valued at half the daily expenses of the whole world!' A century or two later, the Persian conqueror, Nadir Shah, seeing it glitter in the turban of Baber's conquered descendant, exclaimed with rough and somewhat costly humour, 'We will be friends; let us change our turbans in pledge of friendship.' And the exchange, of course, took place.

*Χρύσεα χαλκείων, ἐκατόμβοι ἐννεαβόλων.*

The Afghan conqueror, Ahmed Shah, wrested it, in his turn, from the feeble hands of Nadir Shah's successors, and so it came into the possession of Shah Sooja, who was, by turns, the pensioner and the puppet of the English, and the miserable pretext of the first disastrous Afghan war. Half-prisoner and half-guest of Runjeet Sing, he had been relieved by the one-eyed, money-loving Sikh of the responsibility of keeping so valuable a treasure. Runjeet, listening, on his death-bed, to the suggestions of a wily Brahmin, had been half disposed, like other death-bed penitents, to make his peace with the other world by sending the beautiful jewel to adorn the idol of Juggernaut. But fate reserved it for the custody of the Punjab Board, and for the ultimate possession of the English Crown. One incident of its transfer not generally known, I am able to relate on the best authority.

At one of the early meetings of the Board, the jewel had been formally made over to the Punjab Government, and by it committed to the care of John Lawrence. Perhaps, the other members of the Board thought him the most practical and business-like—as no doubt in most matters he was—of the three; or they deemed that his splendid *physique*, and the gnarled and knotted stick which, fit emblem of himself, he always carried with him—and which the Sikhs, thinking it to be a kind of divining-rod or familiar spirit, christened by its owner's name, 'Jan Larens'—would be the best practical security for its safe keeping. But, in this instance, they misjudged their man. How could a man so careless of the conventionalities of life, a man who never wore a jewel on his person, till the orders and clasps which he won compelled him to do so, and, even then, used to put them so remorselessly in the wrong place that the Court *costumier* exclaimed in despair, that he would lose reputation by him, in spite of all his pains,—how, I ask, was it likely that such a man would realise the inestimable value of the jewel entrusted to him? And, again, what was the custody of a Court jewel compared with that of the happiness of the millions for which he was also responsible? Anyhow, half-unconsciously he thrust it, wrapped up in numerous folds of cloth, into his waistcoat pocket, the whole being contained in an insignificant little box, which could be thus easily put away. He went on working as hard as usual, and thought no more of his precious treasure. He changed his clothes for dinner, and threw his waistcoat aside, still forgetting all about the box contained in it!

About six weeks afterwards, a message came from Lord Dalhousie, saying that the Queen had ordered the jewel to be at once transmitted to her. The subject was mentioned by Sir Henry at the Board, when John said quietly, 'Send for it at once.' 'Why, *you've* got it!' said Sir Henry. In a moment, the fact of his carelessness flashed across him. He was horror-stricken, and, as he used to describe his feelings afterwards, when telling the story, he said to himself, 'Well, this is the worst trouble I have ever yet got into!' But such was his command over his countenance that he gave no external sign of trepidation: 'Oh yes, of course; I forgot about it,' he said, and went on with the

business of the meeting as if nothing had happened. He soon, however, found an opportunity of slipping away, to his private room, and, with his heart in his mouth, sent for his old bearer and said to him, 'Have you got a small box which was in my waistcoat pocket some time ago?' 'Yes, Sahib,' the man replied, '*Dibbia* (the native word for it), I found it and put it in one of your boxes.' 'Bring it here,' said the Sahib. Upon this, the old native went to a broken-down tin box, and produced the little one from it. 'Open it,' said John Lawrence, 'and see what is inside.' He watched the man, anxiously enough, as fold after fold of the small rags was taken off, and great was his relief when the precious gem appeared. The bearer seemed perfectly unconscious of the treasure which he had had in his keeping. 'There is nothing here, Sahib,' he said, 'but a bit of glass!'

The Koh-i-noor was then quickly presented to the Board that it might be forwarded to the Queen; and when John Lawrence told them his story, great was the amusement it caused. The jewel passed, I am told on good authority, through one or two other striking vicissitudes before it was safely lodged in the English crown. But never, I feel sure, whether flashing in the diadem of Turk or Mogul, or in the uplifted sword of Persian, or Afghan, or Sikh conqueror, did it pass through so strange a crisis, or run a greater risk of being lost for ever, than when it lay forgotten in the waistcoat pocket of John Lawrence, or in the broken-down tin box of his aged bearer.

I have spoken of the number and perplexity of the subjects which came before the Board for consideration in its early days. Henry Lawrence was not well at the time of annexation. He had returned hastily from England, without taking the rest which had been prescribed as essential for him, and in sore distress of mind at the mismanagement which, as he conceived, had led to the second Sikh war. The annexation of the Punjab overthrew the dream of a lifetime—the establishment of a strong, friendly, independent native power between ourselves and the wild Afghan tribes. He had struggled against the idea of annexation while it was yet in the future with all the chivalry and generosity of his nature; and now that it was an accomplished fact, he accepted it as such, set himself to make the best of it,

and struggled, with the same chivalry and generosity, to ease the fall of the privileged classes. He contested every inch of ground with Lord Dalhousie and with his brother John, who saw, more clearly than he did, how impossible it was, in view of the poverty of the masses, for the two systems of government—the native feudal system, based on huge grants of land, on immunities from taxation, and on military service; and our own, based on equality before the law, on equal and light assessments, and on reforms and improvements of every kind—to exist side by side. The more that could be left to the Sirdars of their dignity, their power, their property, their immunities, the better, in Henry Lawrence's judgment; the worse in John's and in Lord Dalhousie's. In the one case, the few would gain; in the other, the many. It was one of those questions on which honest and honourable and far-seeing men might well differ.

The work and the worry entailed by the annexation had already begun to tell on Henry Lawrence's enfeebled health. The heat of the season was more than usually intense. It was, as Lord Dalhousie called it, 'a killing summer' for those who had to work through it. Everybody at Lahore suffered, Henry Lawrence most of all; and he was driven, much against his will, to apply for a month's leave of absence at Kussowlie. John Lawrence thus found himself, for the first time, on May 21, 1849, in the doubly delicate and difficult position which it was to be his to fill so often during his brother's Presidency of the Board. Left at Lahore, with one colleague only, who, with all his unquestioned ability, was disposed rather to criticise than to originate, to point out difficulties rather than to drive through them, he found that nearly the whole weight of the current business of the country was put upon his shoulders.

In September, Henry Lawrence set out on a prolonged tour through Huzara and Kashmere. Lord Dalhousie had not been unwilling that the President of the Board should see with his own eyes what was going on in Huzara, the domain of James Abbott, whose fatherly rule there—the rule, as he somewhat bitterly calls it, 'of prophet, priest, and king'—he seems to have regarded with suspicion and mislike. But he had expressed a doubt whether the remaining members would be able to carry on the work without him. The

'killing summer' had pretty well done its work. Ten men of the young Punjab establishment were already *hors de combat*. Mansel, the third member of the Board, and Christian, its Secretary, were ill, whilst Edwardes and Nicholson, who were each in themselves a tower of strength, were shortly going home on leave. But John Lawrence stepped into the gap and filled it as few others could have done, and, from this time forward, I find that he is in regular communication with Lord Dalhousie, giving his views freely on each question as it came up, but taking especial care to lay stress on his brother's views where they differed from his own. His heavy office work was perhaps relieved, rather than increased, by news which seemed to promise something of an adventure, and so to recall the long bygone days of Paniput.

But that which gave the overburdened Punjab administration more trouble and occupied more of its time than any other subject, during the first year of its existence, was the attitude taken up towards it by the impracticable genius whom the outburst of popular indignation after the battle of Chillianwallah had summoned from England to the command of the Indian army. 'If you don't go, I must,' the Duke of Wellington is reported to have said to Sir Charles Napier, when he hesitated to accept the post which was offered to him. His scruples were soon overcome; his ambition was fired; and he went out revolving magnificent schemes of conquest and reform, which were not bounded even by the horizon of India. He landed in Calcutta, on May 6, 1849, and set off with all speed for Simla. But he was already a disappointed man. He expected to find war, and he found peace. Our half-victorious enemies of Chillianwallah had become our peaceful and half-contented subjects; and, to make the disappointment more complete, the conquered country had passed under the control of those 'politicals' upon whose assumed incapacity, alike in peace and in war, the conqueror and pacificator of Scinde had never ceased to pour out the vials of his contempt. 'I would rather,' he wrote to his brother on June 22, 'be Governor of the Punjab than Commander-in-Chief.' Fortunately, or unfortunately, he could not now be Governor of the Punjab; and, in his vexation, he used the opportuni-

ties which his post as Commander-in-Chief gave him, with the result, if not with the intention, of making it doubly difficult for anyone else to be so either.

That a struggle for supremacy would take place between two spirits so masterful and so autocratic as those of the Governor-General and the Commander-in-Chief might have been foreseen from the beginning. But it was equally clear that the man who was armed with 'incontestably superior authority,' and was capable of stern self-control, would beat out of the field the brilliant and unmanageable old soldier, who had 'the faculty of believing without a reason and of hating without a provocation;' and was disposed to think nothing right unless he or his had the doing of it. Sir Charles Napier was now sixty-eight years of age—nearly double, that is, the age of his antagonist—but the feeling that he was in command of an army of 300,000 men made him, for the time, feel young again; and, in spite of a disease which was ultimately to prove fatal, he buckled down to his work at Simla, sitting at his desk, as he tells us himself, for some fifteen hours a day. At his very first interview with the Governor-General, if we can possibly believe the account given by Sir Charles in his posthumous work, the spirit of antagonism flashed forth between them. 'I have been warned,' said Lord Dalhousie, 'not to allow you to encroach on my authority, and I will take — good care you do not.'

But a few quotations taken almost at random from Sir Charles's own letters and diaries, written at the time, will give a better idea than any lengthened description of the man with whom the Punjab Board—which was still in the throes of its birth, and which might have expected gentler treatment from its natural guardians—had now to deal.

On August 2, he writes in his journal:—

Begin a letter to Lord Dalhousie, telling him that, if the army is not relieved from the pressure of the civil power, India is not safe. The habit is that all Civil servants have guards of honour, and treasury guards, and God knows what, till, when added to the military guards and duties, the soldiers are completely knocked up. This shall not go on if I can stop it, and Lord Dalhousie is well disposed to help me. He seems a good fellow and sharp, but I doubt his abilities being equal to the ruling of this vast empire.



Such was Sir Charles Napier's opinion of Lord Dalhousie. Here is his opinion of the Lawrences, and of their relation to the Governor-General :—

The Lawrences have been forced upon Lord Dalhousie ; the Punjab system is not his—at least he tells me so. . . Henry Lawrence is a good fellow, but I doubt his capacity. His brother John is said to be a clever man, and I am inclined to think he is ; but a man may have good sense and yet not be fit to rule a large country.

Here is his description of his own position, as it appeared to himself :—

I am Commander-in-Chief of the Indian army, but I cannot order a man to move. I must write a letter to one secretary, who writes to another, who addresses a third, who asks the Governor-General's leave to move the company back from Batalu. The house that Jack built is a joke to it. The commander of 300,000 men can't move three companies out of danger without leave from the Civil power ! I will not stay in India.

And here, once more, is his description of himself as he ought to be—if ever, that is, his ideal commonwealth, the counterpart of the philosopher-kings, or king-philosophers, of Plato could be realised, when a Sir Charles Napier should be king of England, or the king of England should be a Sir Charles Napier. It is a curious mixture of the grand and the grotesque, the sublime and the pathetic :—

Would that I were king of India ! I would make Muscowa and Pekin shake. . . The five rivers and the Punjab, the Indus and Scinde, the Red Sea and Malta ! what a chain of lands and waters to attach England to India ! Were I king of England, I would, from the palace of Delhi, thrust forth a clenched fist in the teeth of Russia and France. England's fleet should be all in all in the West, and the Indian army all in all in the East. India should not belong another day to the 'ignominious tyrants,' nor should it depend upon opium sales, but on an immense population well employed in peaceful pursuits. She should suck English manufactures up her great rivers, and pour down those rivers her own varied products. Kurrachi, you will yet be the glory of the East ! Would that I could come alive again to see you, Kurrachi, in your grandeur !

As for the high Indian authorities who were opposed, or

—what was the same thing—whom he assumed would be opposed, to him, his views of them are equally explicit.

By an old Indian I mean a man full of curry and of bad Hindustani, with a fat liver and no brains, but with a self-sufficient idea that no one can know India except through long experience of brandy, champagne, gram-fed mutton, cheroots, and hookahs.\*

It was with such feelings towards those who were above, and below, and around him, that the doughty old Commander-in-Chief addressed himself to the military tour of inspection on which he started from Simla, on October 13.

He arrived at Lahore on November 30. His Report was not then finished, so that he had a chance of getting information on the spot from those who were most competent and anxious to give it. But he avoided the society of the Lawrences, declined to discuss any public matters with them, and returned no answer to their pressing inquiries as to that on which so many of their own measures, in particular, the line taken by the Grand Trunk Road, must depend—his military arrangements for the province. They could not find out from him where a single cantonment was to be, nor even whether they were or were not to be responsible for the defence of the frontier and the organisation of its defenders. He would allow the site of no cantonment to be fixed till he had seen it with his own eyes; and this, though he had had at his disposal, for months past, the eyes and the experience of soldiers like Sir Walter Gilbert and Sir Colin Campbell, both of whom held high commands, at the time, in the Punjab.

Such being the circumstances under which his Report was prepared and completed, we are not surprised to find that its assertions are always exaggerated and are often reckless and untrue. The Sikhs—a fact unknown to the Punjab Government and to everybody else, but, somehow, revealed to Sir Charles Napier for the purposes of his Report—were, he said, daily casting guns in holes in the jungles and meditating revolt! Golab Sing's power was enormous—though Henry Lawrence had written to him from Kash-

\* See *Life of Sir Charles Napier*, vol. iv. pp. 166, 170, 173, 181, 183, 208, &c.

mere giving the details gathered on the spot, demonstrating the exact reverse—and he too was preparing for war! The inhabitants of the alpine district to the north of the Jullundur Doab were, as he described them, dissatisfied Sikh soldiers, not, as they really were, submissive and contented Rajpoots! The discontent shown by a few regiments, first at Rawul Pindi and afterwards at Wuzeerabad, in connection with the lowering of their pay, was a perfectly natural incident of such a change. But it was magnified by Sir Charles, as he looked back upon it in after years, into a portentous and premeditated mutiny of some thirty battalions which, had *he* not been there to deal with it, might have threatened our power in India; and this, though Lord Dalhousie, who was responsible for the maintenance of that power, Sir Walter Gilbert, who was in high command in the Punjab, Henry and John Lawrence, who were going in and out amongst the troops, and the Duke of Wellington, to whom the evidence of the 'mutiny' was afterwards submitted by Sir Charles himself—all judged it to be the creature of his own imagination. The force of 54,000 men which garrisoned the conquered province, and which, if he were Governor, might, he said, be cut down at once to 20,000, and soon to something much less, it was necessary to maintain only because the Punjab Government was bad, and because another insurrection was impending! The irregular troops, police, &c., who were independent of him, and who did the main part of the active work of the country, were nothing but 'paid idlers,' who gave no protection at all to the civil servants of the Crown! 'In military matters,' so he sums up his opinion, 'the Punjab Administration is only worthy of censure, and its system appears to me clearly tending to produce early dislike to our rule and possible insurrection. . . . The Government is feeble and expensive, when it ought to be strong and economical.' 'A large revenue and a quiet people,' he adds, with an honesty which was habitual, and with a modesty which was rare in him, 'will make me cut a false prophet.' But, meanwhile, the upshot of the whole Report was that the Scinde military system ought to be the model for the Punjab and for the rest of India. All civil government was self-condemned.

A document of this character could not fail to arouse the susceptibilities of Lord Dalhousie. It touched him in his tenderest point; for the Punjab Government was his own creation. But the annoyance it occasioned was not unmixed with pleasure, for it gave to him, as well as to the members of the Board who were more directly attacked, an opportunity, which they were not likely to neglect, of making a crushing rejoinder. The minute of the Governor-General has been published by Sir Charles Napier himself, but I am not aware that the reply of the Board has ever received equal publicity. It has been preserved among Lord Lawrence's private papers, and I gather, from internal evidence as well as from hints dropped here and there in his letters, that it is his own handiwork throughout. It is a masterly State document, studiously moderate in tone, as indeed the consciousness of a vast reserve of strength in its writer well enabled it to be, and full of interest. Want of space alone prevents my reproducing it in full. To quote the whole of its seventy-six paragraphs would extend this biography beyond reasonable limits, and the other alternative of quoting only the more salient passages of a paper, each paragraph of which depends for its strength on its close connection with what has gone before and with what follows, seems to me to be doubly objectionable. Such a document, if it is to be judged at all, must be judged as a whole; and it may perhaps be hoped that this and other of Lord Lawrence's weightier State papers, whose length precludes them from more than a passing notice in this biography, may some day see the light in a separate volume. Events move quickly even in the East, and change of circumstances may already have caused many of Lord Lawrence's views to seem out of date, but the essential principles underlying all that he wrote and thought and did will be as true a hundred years hence as they are to-day; and from these principles, as from a mine of wealth, many generations of Indian statesmen may gather treasures new and old, learning alike what is the practical ideal at which Indian rulers ought to aim, and what are the dangers which it most behoves them to avoid.

It was well for the peace of the official world in India that neither of the documents of which I have been speak-

ing saw the light till after December 1849; for, in that month, the august antagonists were all thrown together at Lahore. It was one of the earliest visits which the Governor-General had paid to the capital of the province he had annexed. Henry Lawrence hurried back from Kashmere to be in time to receive him there, and Sir Charles Napier arrived, as I have already stated, in the course of his military tour of inspection. The presence of a common foe drew Lord Dalhousie and Henry Lawrence more closely together than might otherwise have been the case, and Sir Charles Napier appears to have occupied most of his time in ridiculing the fortifications of Lahore proposed by the Board, and in proposing counter-fortifications of his own. It was an amusement which Henry Lawrence afterwards retorted on him, and, as it seems, with reason on his side, in the pages of the 'Calcutta Review' (January 1854). The pressing questions of the frontier force and of the cantonments, even those of the capital itself, still remained unsettled. The oracle was dumb, and, till it could be induced to speak, all other arrangements were necessarily suspended.

How the matter ended I am able to relate on the authority of an eye-witness and a principal actor in it. The story has never, I believe, been told till now, and it is highly characteristic of Sir Charles Napier.

One day, towards the end of his stay in Lahore, the three members of the Board and Montgomery, who was then Commissioner of the Lahore division, happened to be taking their early morning ride together, when, in the distance, they saw the Commander-in-Chief and his Staff similarly employed. 'Let us go straight up to him,' said Henry to John Lawrence, 'and see if we cannot manage to get an answer out of him at last about the cantonments for Lahore.' They did so. 'You want to know where the cantonments are to be, do you?' said Sir Charles; 'follow me then;' and, as he spoke, he dug his spurs into his horse and rode off as hard as he could go, neck or nothing, across country, some three or four miles. His Staff followed him as best they could, and Henry Lawrence, John Lawrence, Mansel, and Montgomery, who were probably not so well mounted, followed, as they too best could, behind. It was a regular John Gilpin ride, composed not of post-boys, and of 'six

gentlemen upon the road,' crying 'Stop thief!' but of the most august personages, civil and military, in the Punjab. At last, the old General reined in his horse in the middle of the plain, to all appearance at simple haphazard, and when the last of the long pursuit came up, he cried out from the midst of smoking steeds and breathless riders, 'You asked me where the cantonments are to be; they are to be here.' As ill luck would have it, he had pitched on a bit of ground which was particularly marshy and pestilential. But the word was spoken, and it was only by a stretch of authority that the Engineers employed to construct the cantonments managed to draw them back a little from a rather more to a rather less unhealthy spot. Such was the origin of the famous cantonments of Mean Meer!

This matter settled, Sir Charles was able to pursue his military tour. Accompanied by John Lawrence, he paid a visit to Jummoo and had an interview with Golab Sing. 'The Commander-in-Chief was kind and courteous,' says his companion, while the redoubtable Maharaja was, 'if possible, more civil and amiable than ever.' Sir Charles moved onwards, as he delighted to reflect, over the ground which had been traversed by Alexander the Great, to Wuzeerabad, Jhelum, Rawul Pindi, and Peshawur. At Wuzeerabad, he obtained fresh evidence, as he thought, of the mutinous disposition of the Sepoys, and, at Peshawur, he struck up a considerable friendship with George Lawrence, the officer in charge. 'A right good fellow,' Sir Charles calls him, Lawrence though he was, and guilty though he had also been of the unpardonable offence of 'trying the advising scheme' with him. Some small military operations were just then in progress against the Afridis of the famous Kohat pass. These wild mountaineers had ceded to us the right of making a road through their country on payment of a stipulated sum; they had taken the money, and then, after their fashion, had fallen by night on the detachment of sappers and miners who were employed in the work, had cut the ropes of the tent in which the wearied men lay sleeping, and, before they could disengage themselves, had stabbed them all to death. Sir Charles joined in the operations, which, inconsiderable enough in themselves, are only memorable for the war of

words which sprung up respecting them as soon as the sword was sheathed; the Commander-in-Chief asserting that, but for him, the two regiments employed would have been annihilated by the folly of the Board, and the Board retorting that there had been no serious fighting at all, and that Sir Charles had been escorted back in safety to Peshawur by Coke and Pollock, rather than they by Sir Charles. In any case, it was the last time that the grand old soldier was under fire, and during his military tour, tempestuous as it was, he managed to confer at least two benefits on the country. He cut down, for the time, the extravagant retinue which had usually accompanied the Commander-in-Chief when he was on the march, and which had often preyed, like a swarm of locusts, on the districts through which it had advanced. And, secondly, he succeeded in inducing Lord Dalhousie to lessen the danger of combination among the Sepoys, by enlisting some Ghoorkas along with them. 'Like Brennus,' as he said himself, 'he threw the sword of those redoubtable little warriors into the scale;' and the experiment, in spite of the misgivings of Lord Dalhousie and Henry Lawrence, has been abundantly justified by its success. In whatever part of our Empire the Ghoorkas have been called upon to draw the sword in our defence, they have done us excellent service.

In the spring of this year (1850) Henry Lawrence set out on a prolonged visit to Kashmere. He was accompanied, during a part of it, by his wife and his daughter Honoria (now Mrs. Henry Hart), then an infant only six weeks old. Dr. Hathaway, who had been his Private Secretary, and was now surgeon to the civil station at Lahore, and Hodson, afterwards of Hodson's Horse, were also members of the party.

There were elements of romantic interest about the journey which exactly suited Henry Lawrence. The surpassing beauty of the scenery of Kashmere is now well known. But, at that time, hardly any Europeans had set foot in the country. It was a native state which had been saved from annexation, in part at least, by Henry Lawrence's own chivalrous exertions, and upon its throne sat the astute Golab Singh, whose misdeeds Henry Lawrence, as his patron, had been driven, by a somewhat cruel destiny, and with

a strange conflict of feelings, now to condemn, and now, again, to extenuate and defend. The tour was prolonged farther northward still to Iskardo and Ladak, and the elements of romance seemed to multiply as the travellers advanced farther and farther into the region of the unknown. 'Five times over,' as Henry Lawrence writes exultingly to his brother George, he had been 'above 14,000 feet high,' he had given a dinner to some three hundred natives of those remote latitudes who traded with Yarkand—probably the most original and picturesque as well as the most costly and most difficult entertainment which even he, in his boundless hospitality, had ever given—and he was looking forward to one on a still larger scale, which he was about to give to a mixed party of merchants and soldiers at Iskardo.

The adventurous and daring as well as the unscrupulous character of Hodson came out repeatedly during the journey. On one occasion, he climbed, at the imminent peril of his life, a snowy peak resembling that of the Matterhorn, on which, as Henry Lawrence afterwards remarked, 'none but a Hodson or an eagle would have thought of setting foot.' His fate reserved him for many a deed of higher daring still, but for a less happy end.

Another unpleasant element in the expedition was the correspondence with Lord Dalhousie which had preceded it. Henry had applied for leave of absence during the rainy season, in the hope that he might get the better of his attacks of fever, which had been more than usually severe; and Lord Dalhousie had demurred to the proposal on the ground that his habitual absence from Lahore for nearly half the year was incompatible with his office and unfair to his colleagues, who would not be able to stir from the capital till he returned. 'Of Mr. Mansel's habits I know nothing, but it is impossible that, after the active movements of your brother's life for so many years, imprisonment in one place can be otherwise than bad for him. Previous to your departure, therefore, before the rains, I would request that he would come up to Simla and meet me there.' Lord Dalhousie's consent was given grudgingly, and its tone may well have been resented by a man who was so unsparing of himself as Henry Lawrence. But his fore-



bodings as to the danger to the younger brother's health proved true. The strain of unintermittent work for nearly ten years had begun to tell even on John Lawrence's iron constitution. The rains, which Henry had wished to avoid, ceased early, and then a terribly unhealthy season set in. The old cantonments at Anarkulli were devastated by disease, and Sir Charles Napier's new ones at Mean Meer fared even worse. At Wuzeerabad, Inglis declared that 'his whole office was prostrate,' and the natives throughout the Punjab suffered more even than the Europeans.

John Lawrence was one of the last to succumb. He had worked hard the whole summer through, and now, early in October, his turn came. It was a sharp attack of remittent fever. The symptoms rapidly developed; intense pain in the head and very high fever, followed by sickness and delirium. Those about him had begun to fear the worst, but a cold douche extemporised by Dr. Hathaway had a magical effect. The fever and delirium disappeared almost instantaneously. He dropped off into a quiet sleep, and woke up out of danger. As is often the case with very strong men when attacked by illness, his strength had gone all at once, and it now returned almost as rapidly; and, by the 16th of the month, the day originally fixed, he was able to start for his long-projected tour with the Governor-General. Lord Dalhousie had peremptorily overruled his generous wish that his brother should go in his stead. 'I shall be delighted,' he wrote on September 16, 'to see you at Roopur, but I want also to have you with me in the latter part of the march. If your brother returns in October, he can accompany me to meet Golab at Wuzeerabad. After that, he must take his turn at Lahore. I wish for your presence with me.' Lord Dalhousie's wish was equivalent to a command, and, for the next six months, except during short intervals, when he ran down to Lahore, John Lawrence was to be found in the locomotive camp of the Governor-General, who had come to the Punjab with the intention of seeing as much as he possibly could.

What Lord Dalhousie thought of John Lawrence's services to the State, and what he felt towards him personally, is clear from the following letter, written on October 21—

soon, that is, after he heard of his sudden and dangerous illness :—

I have not plagued you with any letter since I heard of your illness. I need not say how deeply and truly I grieved to learn the severe attack you have suffered, and how anxious I shall be to learn again that you are improving during your march, and that you are not foolishly impeding your recovery by again returning to work. I am terrified at the thought of your being compelled to give up work and go home for a time, and I plead with you to spare yourself for a time as earnestly as I would plead to save my own right hand. Two of you have been working hard enough, Heaven knows, for the third; let the other two now take their turn of working for you. Keep enough work in your hands to employ you, but don't take so much as to burden you.

It is little to be wondered at that the Governor-General, when he realised the full danger to which his Lieutenant had been exposed, insisted that he should spend the next hot season, not in the fever-stricken furnace of Lahore, but amidst the cool breezes of Simla. And it may also be added, by way of anticipation, that it was the readiness of resource shown by Dr. Hathaway at the critical moment, as well as his aptitude for work, tested during a long and intimate acquaintance with him in India, which, fourteen years later, served to recommend him for the post of Private Secretary to the man who had then just been called, by universal acclamation, to the highest post in the Indian Empire, that of Viceroy and Governor-General.

In April 1851, John Lawrence followed his wife and family to Simla, and, here, he and they had the ineffable happiness—hardly, I suppose, to be understood by anyone who has not experienced it himself, or who has not suffered from the Indian sun as John Lawrence had always done—of spending the first of some twenty summers which had passed since he came to India, among the hills. The long walks, the pleasant society, the lovely climate of that earthly paradise, the kindness of Lord and Lady Dalhousie, the hard work done under conditions which seemed to make it no work at all, altogether went to form an oasis in his Indian life, on which she who enjoyed and shared it with him can still, after thirty years have come and gone, look back with melancholy delight. But even here he was not to escape altogether from the effects of the deadly climate of Lahore.

In September, he again broke down with a renewed attack of the fever of the preceding year, and the four doctors who attended him—Lord Dalhousie's physician among them—agreed that nothing but a return to England would restore him to health. 'If I cannot go to India and live there, I will go and die there,' he had said, ten years before, as a newly married man with no definite employment in view, when the doctors warned him not again to attempt the Indian climate. And it was not likely now, when the interests of a vast province in so large a measure depended on him, that he would think differently. Nothing should induce him, he said, to go home till he had done the work which he had then in hand; and, when once the fever had abated, he rallied so quickly that all thought of his return was given up, even by his doctors and his wife.

Lord Dalhousie, however, was not so easily satisfied, and, in his anxiety to spare one whose services he valued 'as he did his own right hand,' he wrote to the Directors of the East India Company, asking to allow his lieutenant to go home on exceptionally favourable terms. The request was refused on public grounds, but the refusal was accompanied by expressions which showed a high appreciation of John Lawrence's services. I insert here a few lines from one of his letters on this subject to Lord Dalhousie, chiefly because of the light it throws on what were then his plans for the future:—

I have made up my mind not to go home. It would, I think, be suicidal in me, at my age and with the claims which my children have on me, to do so. My health is very uncertain; I do not think that I have more than three or four years of good honest work left in me. In May, 1855, I shall have served my time, and be entitled to my annuity, and, by that time, I shall have saved a sufficiency for my own moderate wants and to bring up my children. Without making up my mind absolutely to retire at that period, I wish to be in a position to be able to do so. If I go home now without pay, I shall come back to this country without the slightest chance of being able to retire as I propose, for I shall have to spend in my trip the best part of my savings. I am infinitely obliged for the kindness and consideration which led your Lordship to recommend the indulgence, and am gratified with the flattering manner in which it has been negatived.

By November, Lawrence returned to Lahore, visiting all the civil stations on the way, and bringing with him an

infant son—Edward Hayes—who had been born in June, at Simla. It was a lovely child, which had seemed from its very birth to call forth from beneath the rugged exterior of his father that vein of tenderness which those who knew him well knew was always there. A child, particularly a young one, seemed often able—as a notable incident which I shall relate at a subsequent period of his life will show—to calm John Lawrence when he was most ruffled, and to cheer him when he was most wearied with the anxieties and the vexations of his daily work. This babe had been delicate from its birth—so delicate, that its mother feared now to expose it to the rough camp life which formed a principal part of the winter's work in the Punjab. Accordingly, while the father was roaming about his province in tents, the mother stayed at home to tend it.

But, howsoe'er it was,  
After a lingering, ere she was aware,  
Like a caged bird escaping suddenly,  
The little innocent soul flitted away.

It was a crushing sorrow, and not to the mother alone. It was the first time that death had come into the Lawrence family. The strong man was broken down; and to the astonishment of those that did not know him well—but only to those—he was seen weeping like a child, as he followed the body to the grave. It was not often that John Lawrence was seen to shed tears; and I have thought it worth while, in the course of this biography, to specify the two or three occasions when he is known to have done so. But his tears were only the outward and intermittent signs of the perennial spring of tenderness which lay below; of a tenderness which was, perhaps, more real because it made so little show, and certainly gave more encouragement and more support to those on whom it was habitually lavished, because it was felt to be the tenderness, not of a weakling, but of a strong, rough-hewn man.

It was the first death. But it was not the first break in the family. For in the autumn of the year of annexation (1849), the inevitable severance, bitter almost as death, to which all Indian families must look forward, and that, too, at the time of life when the child most needs the parent,

and the parent most misses the child, had taken place. The two eldest daughters had been sent off to England, under somewhat exceptional circumstances. It happened that Herbert Edwardes and John Nicholson were about to leave on furlough, and they volunteered to undertake a task, which not even such friends as the Lawrences would have ever thought of proposing to them—the trouble and responsibility of conveying the little girls to England. ‘It was considered,’ says Lady Lawrence, ‘somewhat strange to send two little girls away with only two young men as their escort, but they were dear and trusted friends; and right nobly they fulfilled their trust, not minding the trouble and anxiety of little children, but tenderly caring for them all the way.’ Their father accompanied them to Ferozepore, and there handed them over, with their ayah, to their kind escort, who conveyed them down the Indus to Bombay, and, thence, safely to England. And, assuredly, when we consider what young unmarried officers usually are like, and how utterly incapable they would be, even if they had the will, of undertaking such a charge, we shall be disposed to regard this as not the least characteristic, or the least lovable, passage in the lives of the young hero of Mooltan, or of the afterwards still more distinguished hero of Delhi.

During John Lawrence’s sojourn at Simla in 1850, an important change had taken place in the *personnel* of the Board. I have already endeavoured to indicate the general characteristics of the third member of the triumvirate, and have pointed out how valuable must have been the make-weight which Mansel’s evenly balanced and philosophic temperament offered to the more drastic and impetuous spirits which, for the time being, were linked to his. Both brothers appreciated highly his intellectual gifts, and regarded him with the most friendly feelings. But both looked upon him, also, as a drag upon the coach. They were always, or nearly always, for action; he was always, or nearly always, for talking about it. In every question which was brought before him he saw, like other men of his turn of mind, at least three possible courses; and the *tertium quid* on which he seemed inclined to settle, rather than ever actually did settle down at last, was generally one which did not suit precisely the views of either of his

colleagues. When, as often happened, Henry Lawrence had one plan for the solution of a difficult problem, and John another, and they were both brought to Mansel for his deciding voice, he 'cushioned' both of them; that is to say, he put them into his pocket, and the question was shelved *sine die*. He would sometimes, as I have been told by an eye-witness, walk for an hour or two up and down the verandah in front of the Residency, arguing seriously against some project which Henry was pressing upon him with characteristic earnestness. At the end of the discussion, he would say quietly, 'Well, though I have been arguing thus with you, I have not been speaking my own views; I have only been showing you what might be said by John against your project;' and he would often do the same with John. This method of procedure was not exactly suited to the proclivities of either brother. John Lawrence was fond enough of discussion, provided it were a preliminary to action, but Mansel's talk he knew well was apt to end in nothing else; and Henry, who was of a hotter temperament, and much more intolerant of opposition, in the vexation of the moment would sometimes regard Mansel's disputations as not only injurious, but insulting. Neither of the brothers, it will be seen, would have altogether approved of the Socratic method of inquiry, and both would, at times, have been disposed to elbow that impracticable philosopher out of their way, as an impediment to energetic and immediate action. When, therefore, the Residency at Nagpore fell vacant, in November, 1850, a post for which both brothers thought Mansel better suited, they agreed in asking Lord Dalhousie to send him thither. Lord Dalhousie assented, and Mansel took the appointment with, probably, not a little feeling of relief.

Indeed, the third place in the Board can have been no bed of roses to its occupant, whoever he might be. Henry Lawrence himself, speaking from his own experience, called it a bed of thorns; and, by a strange coincidence, there stepped into it the man who had been a friend of the Lawrence family from his earliest boyhood; had been at Foyle College with both Henry and John Lawrence; had known the wives of both while they were still young girls living in his own neighbourhood amidst the wilds of Donegal;

had kept up his affectionate interest in them and in their husbands while he was gradually rising from one post of duty to another with a rapidly increasing reputation in the North-West ; had been, on Henry Lawrence's recommendation, summoned to Lahore when the annexation of the Punjab took place, and had now, during the last year and a half, as the Commissioner of the most central and most important district of the annexed province, been brought into close official connection with both him and John. He was thus marked out by his antecedents, by his actual position, and by his promise for the future, to be their colleague on the Board ; and so he stepped, as of natural right, into the vacant seat.

Attached by ties of enthusiastic admiration and love to Henry Lawrence, and by strong affection as well as by general aptitudes, by official training and by views of State policy, to John, he seemed pre-eminently the man to get on well with both, to pour oil upon the troubled waves, and, if he could not altogether remove, at least to lessen, the rubs and annoyances, the heart-burnings and the misconceptions, which, if they had hitherto worked admirably for the State, had not worked equally well for the peace of mind of those who held the reins of power. With an appetite for work sufficient to satisfy the demands of the Lawrences themselves, and, perhaps, an even greater facility for getting through it ; with a readiness of resource which never failed ; with an equanimity which was depicted even on his countenance and could never be ruffled ; and with a courage which never allowed him to doubt that things, even when they looked most desperate, would, somehow, come right at last, and which forced those who were of a less sanguine temperament to share his confidence,—he seemed marked out for the place he was to fill, even if the profound peace which then reigned in the Punjab should be succeeded by a time of trouble. No one then foresaw—it was impossible that they could have foreseen—the storm which, some years afterwards, was to burst over India ; but even if it had been foreseen, and its exact course predicted, it is doubtful whether any man could have been found in the whole of the country so admirably adapted to fill the precise niche which he did fill when the outbreak

came. If there is any one act in the long roll of the brilliant achievements of the lieutenants of John Lawrence during the Mutiny which may be singled out from the rest as having been done exactly at the time, at the place, and in the manner in which it ought to have been done—as having been planned with caution as well as courage, and carried out with triumphant success, and so, as having given, at the very beginning of the struggle, an omen of its ultimate result—that act was the disarmament of the sepoys at Lahore on the morning of May 13, 1857; and the man to whom, by universal consent, next after General Corbett, with whom the chief responsibility rested, it was pre-eminently due, was Robert Montgomery.

In December 1852, a crisis came. The Residency at Hyderabad fell vacant, and both the Lawrences wrote—almost simultaneously—to Lord Dalhousie, requesting him to transfer one or other of them to the vacant post. Each avowed frankly his own preference for the Punjab, but each expressed his readiness and even anxiety to leave it rather than prolong the existing state of things. Make any arrangement, was the upshot of their request, by which we may yet do good service to the State, but let it be in lines where our different views may obtain their appropriate field. John wrote to Courtenay, the Secretary to the Governor-General. The letter is long, but it is important, and I quote the greater part of it :—

Lahore: December 5, 1852.

My dear Courtenay,—The circumstance that General Fraser is about to leave Hyderabad has led me to a hope, perhaps a vain one, that it may give an opening for some change in my present position. I am well aware how decidedly the Governor-General was, last year, opposed to my leaving the Punjab, and how much kindness he showed me in giving Mansel Nagpore. But it is just possible that the same objections may not appear so cogent now. Be this as it may, I feel a strong desire to explain to you the perplexities of my situation. My brother and I work together no better than we formerly did. Indeed, the estrangement between us has increased. We seldom meet, and still more seldom discuss public matters. I wish to make no imputation against him. His antecedents have been so different from mine, we have been trained in such different schools, that there are few questions of internal policy connected with the administration on which we coincide. I have now, as I have always had since annexation, a very large portion of the work to do. I have endeavoured, but in vain, to secure a division of labour,



not simply because I was impatient of advice, or averse to hear the opinions of my colleagues, but because I found it was the only way to prevent continual collision. I can understand each member working his own department, enjoying the credit of success, and responsible for failure. I can understand three members working in unison who have a general unity of view, and the work of all thereby lightened. But what I feel is the mischief of two men brought together, who have both strong wills and views diametrically opposed, and whose modes and habits of business do not conform.

The Governor-General once remarked to me that, however much we might both suffer from such a state of things, the result has been publicly beneficial. It may have been so, but this is daily becoming less apparent. You once remarked that had I given way more, it was not improbable that my brother would, ere this, have gone home. But this is a mistake. He will stay in India as long as he can. He does not like England; his wife absolutely dislikes it. He will live and die in harness, as I have often heard him express it. But, setting all this aside, I should be sincerely sorry to benefit at his expense. Moreover, it would have been neither honourable nor becoming to have given up my deeply rooted and long-considered views of public matters in the hope of personal benefit. The result, also, in the administration would have proved different. Our antagonism has had the effect of securing a middle course, but it has lessened the force of the administration; it has delayed the despatch of business, and given rise to anomalies and inconsistencies in our correspondence and policy, and lessened the influence we should possess over our subordinates. To me, this state of things has been so irksome, so painful, that I would consent to great sacrifices to free myself. I care not how much work I have, how great may be my responsibilities, if I have simply to depend on myself; but it is killing work always pulling against wind and tide, always fighting for the unpopular and ungrateful cause.

I am the member of the Board for economy even to frugality; my brother is liberal even to excess. I see that the expenses of the country are steadily increasing, and its income rather decreasing, and thus, that useful and necessary expenditure must be denied. I am constantly urged to give my countenance to measures I deem inexpedient, and my refusal is resented as personally offensive. I am averse to passing any questions, to recommending any measure, without scrutiny; this necessity is not felt by my brother, or he satisfies himself by a shorter process, and, hence, I have to toil through every detail. Even when I go away for a time I gain little, for I still carry my own immediate work, and, when I return, find accumulated arrears.

If I feel so heavily the discomfort of my position, my brother is equally sensible of his own. He thinks he has not that power and influence which, as President, he should have, or which his general ability and force of character should ensure for him. He deems himself checked and trammelled on all sides. . . . If Hyderabad is not thought suited to me or is wanted for another, I shall be glad of any berth which may fall vacant. Rajpootana, Lucknow, Indore, would, any of them, delight me. I would even accept a Commissionership, and go back to the

humdrum life of the North-West, if I can do so with honour. My first impulse was to write to the Governor-General. On reflection, I prefer addressing you. A refusal through you will, perhaps, be less distressing than one from his Lordship. You can say as little or as much to him as you think fit. He has always treated me with frankness and consideration, nor do I wish him to think me insensible of such treatment. I can write to you with more ease than would be becoming if I addressed his Lordship.

The two resignations being thus practically placed together in Lord Dalhousie's hands, it remained for him to make the embarrassing choice, which he had so long managed to postpone, between them. Had it still been his wish to prolong the existence of the Board, his choice would hardly have been doubtful between the soldier who disagreed with so much of his policy and the civilian who heartily approved of it. But he had long since made up his mind, when a convenient opportunity should occur, to dissolve the Board itself now that its work was done, and to substitute for it the rule of a single man. This made his decision to be almost beyond the possibility of doubt. No conscientious Governor-General would be likely to confide the destinies of so vast and so important a province to the supreme command of a man with whom he was only half in sympathy, and to whom, owing to the differences between them, he had never given more than half his confidence, when there was a rival candidate on whom he could place the most implicit reliance, and with whom he could feel the fullest sympathy. The Hyderabad vacancy had already been filled up by the appointment of Colonel Low, but the 'Agency to the Governor-General in Rajpootana,' a post, in many respects, admirably suited to a man who had such keen sympathy with native dynasties and which required its occupant to travel about all the cool season, and allowed him to rest all the hot in the pleasant retreat of Mount Aboo, was offered to Henry Lawrence instead.

But Rajpootana was not the Punjab. It was not the country in which he had made warm personal friends by thousands, and round which the labours and the aspirations of a lifetime had gathered. What boot it that his salary as Agent was to be made equal to that which he had had as member of the Board; that the work was less heavy and

less trying; and that the Governor-General, by way of sugaring the bitter pill which he had to swallow, told him that if Sir Thomas Munro himself had been a member of the Board, he would still have been driven to appoint 'a trained civilian' in preference to him as Chief Commissioner? All this was like so much vinegar poured into his open wounds; for Henry Lawrence, if he was not 'a trained civilian,' and if he failed therefore in the more mechanical parts of a civilian's duty—method, accuracy of detail, continuous application seems to have been altogether unconscious of the failure; and it is not too much to say that, for twenty years past, he had filled civil and political offices in the North-West, on the Punjab frontier, and in the Punjab itself, in a way in which few civilians in India could have filled them. His life was, henceforward, to be a wounded life, and he carried with him to the grave a bitter sense of what he thought was the injury done to him by Lord Dalhousie. Perhaps he would have been more or less than human if it had not been so. But if he needed any assurance of the way in which his work had told, and of the impress which he would leave behind him in the country of his choice, it would have been given by the scene which, as more than one person who was present has described it to me, was witnessed at Lahore when the decision of Lord Dalhousie—fully expected, yet almost stupefying when it came, quite justified by the facts, yet, naturally enough, resented and condemned—was made known there. Grief was depicted on every face. Old and young, rich and poor, soldiers and civilians, Englishmen and natives, each and all felt that they were about to lose a friend. Strong men, Herbert Edwardes conspicuous amongst them, might be seen weeping like little children; and when the last of those last moments came, and Henry Lawrence, on January 20, 1853, accompanied by his wife and sister, turned his back for ever upon Lahore and upon the Punjab, a long cavalcade of aged native chiefs followed him, some for five, some for ten, others for twenty or twenty-five miles out of the city. They were men, too, who had nothing now to hope from him, for the sun of Henry Lawrence had set, in the Punjab at least, for ever. But they were anxious to evidence, by such poor signs as they could give, their grief, their

gratitude, and their admiration. It was a long, living funeral procession from Lahore nearly to Umritsur. Robert Napier, now Lord Napier of Magdala, was the last to tear himself away from one who was dearer to him than a brother. 'Kiss him,' said Henry Lawrence to his sister, as Napier turned back, at last, heart-broken towards Lahore. 'Kiss him, he is my best and dearest friend.' When he reached Umritsur, at the house of Charles Saunders, the Deputy-Commissioner, a new group of mourners and a fresh outburst of grief awaited him; and thence he passed on into Rajpootana, 'dented all over,' to use his friend Herbert Edwardes' words, 'with defeats and disapprovals, honourable scars in the eyes of the bystanders.' They were honourable, indeed, because they were all of them received, in accordance with his own chivalrous character, 'in defence of those who were down.'

'Toknow Sir Henry was to love him,' says one of his friends. 'No man ever dined at Sir Henry's table without learning from him to think more kindly of the natives,' says another. 'His character was far above his career, distinguished as that career was,' said Lord Stanley. 'There is not, I am sure,' said Lord Canning, when the disastrous news of his soldier's death at Lucknow thrilled throughout England and India, 'any Englishman in India who does not regard the loss of Sir Henry Lawrence as one of the heaviest of public calamities. There is not, I believe, a native of the provinces where he has held authority who will not remember his name as that of a friend and generous benefactor to the races of India.'

## CHAPTER XIII.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER OF THE PUNJAB. 1852-1853.

THE departure of Sir Henry Lawrence from the Punjab, if it gave an immediate feeling of relief from an intolerable tension, was also a cause of sore distress of mind to the brother who had been working with him under such strained relations, but with such truly brotherly affection. How painful and how distressing the whole circumstances had been to him, his innermost circle of friends and relations alone knew fully. But it may also be inferred from the whole course of the preceding narrative. To have worked as he had done for and with his brother, often at the expense of his personal inclinations, of his health, of his family life for years past, ever since, in fact, our connection with the Punjab had begun, and then to have been driven at last to take the place which that brother might have been expected, and had himself expected, to fill; to feel that some of the best officers in the Punjab, men who had been attracted thither by Henry, and regarded him with enthusiastic affection, were looking askance at him, perhaps, attributing to him unworthy acts or unworthy motives, and, perhaps, also, preparing, like Nicholson, to leave him in the lurch and follow the fortunes of their old master; to feel that the iron had entered so deeply into his brother's soul as to make it doubtful whether he would ever care to see him again, or to be addressed by the old familiar name of 'Hal,'\*—all this must have been distressing enough, and, for the time at all events, must have thrown the other feeling of relief into the background.

\* His letters to his brother after this period always begin, 'My dear Henry.'

In reply to a touching letter which his brother had written to him on the eve of his departure, begging him to treat the dispossessed chiefs kindly, 'because they were down,' and wishing him all success in his new post, John Lawrence replied as follows :—

My dear Henry,—I have received your kind note, and can only say in reply that I sincerely wish that you had been left in the Punjab to carry out your own views, and that I had got another berth. I must further say that where I have opposed your views I have done it from a thorough conviction, and not from factious or interested motives. I will give every man a fair hearing, and will endeavour to give every man his due. More than this no one should expect. . . . It is more than probable that you and I will never again meet; but I trust that all unkindly feeling between us may be forgotten.

Yours affectionately,

JOHN LAWRENCE.

It was a melancholy beginning for the Chief Commissioner-ship—a post inferior in importance to few in India, and one which Sir Charles Napier had himself said he would prefer to the command-in-chief of the Indian army. But, once more, it may be observed that it was to the advantage of the State, not less than of the brothers themselves, that the change had, at last, been made. Henry Lawrence had bridged over the interval between the native and the English systems, had eased the fall of the privileged classes, had attracted the affections of all ranks to himself, and so, in a measure, to the new Government, in a way in which John by himself could certainly not have done. The work of pacification—Henry's proper work—was over. The foundation of the new edifice had been laid, in much tribulation, perhaps, but by a happy compromise between the extremities of the two brothers. It now remained to build upon the foundation which had been laid, to develop, to organise, to consolidate. This could be better done by one man than by three; and the warmest admirers of Henry will admit that, when the crisis came four years later, it was well for England and well for India that there were then, and that there had been for those four preceding years, no divided counsels in the Punjab. It was well that there was one clear head, one firm will, one strong hand, to which anybody and everybody could look, and which would be free to judge,

to issue orders and to strike, on its own undivided responsibility.

On the final abolition of the Board, in February 1853, John Lawrence was gazetted 'Chief Commissioner of the Punjab.' He alone was to be responsible to the Supreme Government for carrying out its orders. He was to be the head of the executive in all its branches, to take charge of the political relations with the adjoining states, to have the general control of the frontier force, of the Guide corps, of the military police, and of the Civil Engineer's department. Under him there were to be two 'Principal Commissioners,' the one the head of the Judicial, the other of the Financial departments of the State. The division of labour for which, as a member of the Board, he had so often and so earnestly pleaded, was thus carried out under the most favourable auspices. Each of the two officers under him was to have sole control over his own department instead of a divided joint control over all. In this manner, his attention was concentrated and his individual responsibility fixed, while uniformity of design and of practice was secured by the appointment of a single head.

The two men selected to fill the posts next to John Lawrence in dignity were, both of them, men after his own heart. Montgomery, of course, was one of them. He became Judicial Commissioner, and, as such, he was not merely to be the chief judge of appeal and assize, but was to discharge many purely executive functions, to superintend the roads, to be the head of the police, to have the control of the local and municipal funds, and to be responsible for the execution of miscellaneous improvements, especially for the progress of education. The Financial duties fell to George Edmonstone, who had just filled the difficult and complicated post of Commissioner in the Cis-Sutlej States, and whose contemplated return to England had filled John Lawrence with anxiety only a few weeks before. Everything now went smoothly enough. Arrears of all kinds were rapidly cleared off. Those officers who had threatened, in their vexation, to leave the Punjab, did not carry out their threat, and few of them ever talked again of doing so. Those who were away on furlough and who said, in their vexation, that they would never return to it, now that it had lost Henry Lawrence, were

glad enough to do so, when they found how much of what was best in Henry Lawrence's administration was also to be found in John's. Nicholson, in particular, whose presence among the wild tribes of Bunnoo John Lawrence pronounced, a few months later, to be 'well worth the wing of a regiment,' in spite of the hasty resolve which I have just mentioned, and in spite also of many misunderstandings which were rendered inevitable by his masterful spirit and ungovernable temper, was induced or enabled by the unvarying tact and temper of his chief to remain at his post even till the Mutiny broke out. A few sentences from the first letter which John Lawrence wrote to him—the first letter which he wrote to any one after he became Chief Commissioner—may, in view of the romantic interest attaching to the recipient and the characteristic frankness and friendliness on the writer's part, fitly find a place here.

Lahore: January 22.

My dear Nicholson,— . . . You have lost a good friend in my brother, but I hope to prove just as staunch a one to you. I set a great value on your zeal, energy, and administrative powers, though I may sometimes think you have a good deal to learn. You may rest assured of my support and good-will in all your labours. You may depend on it that order, rule, and law are good in the hands of those who can understand them, and who know how to apply their knowledge. They increase tenfold the power of work in an able man, while, without them, ordinary men can do but little. I hope you will try and assess all the rent of Bunnoo this cold weather. It will save you much future trouble. Assess low, leaving fair and liberal margin to the occupiers of the soil, and they will increase their cultivation and put the revenue almost beyond the reach of bad seasons. Eschew middle-men. They are the curse of the country everywhere. The land must pay the revenue and feed them, as well as support the occupiers. With a light assessment, equally distributed over the village lands, half your labour will cease, and you will have full time to devote to police arrangements.

Yours sincerely,

JOHN LAWRENCE.

It may also be remarked here, that, when once the spirit of mutual antagonism had been removed by the removal of his brother, John Lawrence's policy in the matter of jagheers and rent-free tenures began to gravitate slightly, but sensibly, towards that of Henry. Perhaps the last moving appeal of Henry Lawrence on behalf of 'those who were down' had touched a chord in his heart of the existence



of which he may have been hardly conscious before. But, in any case, the recommendations on the subject of such tenures—some sixty or seventy thousand of which had not yet been considered—which were made by him, as Chief Commissioner, tended to be more liberal in their character than any which he had ever sanctioned as member of the Board. So liberal were they, that they were often disallowed by Government, and, at last, drew down a letter of rebuke from Lord Dalhousie himself, who appealed from the John Lawrence of the present to the John Lawrence of former days. It must have been one drop of comfort in Henry Lawrence's bitter cup, if he realised that it was so.

In personal character, too, I think I am not wrong in saying that John Lawrence bore, henceforward, a greater and a constantly increasing resemblance to his brother. Without losing a particle of his energy, his independence, his zeal, he did lose, henceforward, something of his roughness, something of that which an outsider, or an opponent, might have put down as hard or harsh. 'The two Lawrences,' says one who knew them intimately and appreciated them equally, General Reynell Taylor, 'were really very much alike in character. They each had their own capabilities and virtues, and when one of them was removed from the scene, the *frater superstes* succeeded to many of the graces of his lost brother.' In this sense it is, I believe, true that the influence of Henry Lawrence was greater on his brother, and was even more felt throughout the Punjab Administration when he had left the country for ever, than while he was living and working within it; just as the words, the looks, the memory of the dead have often a more living influence on the survivors than had all the charms of their personal presence. The memorable words, 'If I be lifted up from the earth, I will draw all men unto me,' are true, not in their literal and their original sense alone. They give expression to a great fact of human nature, which—as He who uttered them would, we may believe, have been the first to point out—are true, in their measure, of all His followers, and, most of all, of those who follow Him most closely.

To get the pay of the Punjab officers raised to an equality with those of other parts of India, and so to remove a standing grievance, from which they, if any officers in India,

deserved to be free ; to instruct—personally to instruct, as though he had been their immediate superior—young and raw civilians in the routine of their duties, and so to bring his personal influence to bear upon them from the very beginning of their career ; to induce men who, like Nicholson or Mackeson or Hodson, were essentially men of action, to become—what was much more difficult and still more essential for good government—men of business also, and to keep and send in the reports of their administration punctually ; to induce men who, like Nicholson again, or Edwardes or James, were, before all things, soldiers, and whose notions of justice were essentially military notions—a short shrift or a quick delivery—to adhere rigidly to the forms of justice ; to take care, for instance, that even when a murderer was caught red-handed on the Trans-Indus frontier he should be confronted with witnesses, should be allowed to summon them for himself, and to have the charge, the evidence, and the sentence carefully put on record ; to induce men who, like Nicholson once more, must have been conscious of their unique powers of command and of their superior military ability, to be ready always to consult and to obey their superior in military rank ; to persuade energetic military politicals, like Coke, who were always burning to take part in military operations which were going on, perhaps, some fifty miles from their civil station, that the chief test of a good officer was his willingness always to remain at his post ; to keep the Engineers, with Robert Napier at their head, within bounds in carrying out their magnificent works, and to convince them—though in this not even he, much less any one else, could have succeeded—that one of the most necessary parts of their public duties was a strict and punctual preparation of their accounts ; to correspond at great length, and with infinite tact, with his friend Courtenay, Private Secretary to the Governor-General, on important and embarrassing questions of State, for which he had gradually to prepare the 'Lord Sahib's' mind, and then put them before him for decision, in the fitting manner and at the fitting time and place ; to bring before the Governor-General himself, with judicial impartiality, the conflicting claims of every candidate for every important post in the Punjab ; to induce him, at whatever cost, to remove an incompetent,

an unwilling, or an unworthy officer, on the principle on which he himself had always acted, that it was better that one man should die for the people than that a whole people should die for one man ; to suggest to overworked and overwilling men, like John Becher, the necessity—a necessity which John Lawrence certainly never recognised in his own case—of sparing themselves, and to point out the precise methods by which they could best do so ; to help those who like Donald Macleod, with the best intentions and the highest ability, were yet, owing to unconquerable idiosyncrasies, always hopelessly in arrears, by actually himself going through hundreds of their papers and clearing them off ; to protect the natives generally, particularly the native soldiers, from all ill-treatment, whether of a blow, a word, or a contemptuous gesture from officers who occasionally, even in the Punjab, dared to forget that difference of colour or of race implied only an increase of moral responsibility ; to order or counter-order, or keep within the limits of justice and of moderation, the retaliatory expeditions which the raids of the wild tribes upon our frontier, after long forbearance on our part, often rendered inevitable ; to keep down, in view of the paramount necessity, in so poor a country, for economy, the demands for additional assistants which crowded upon him from the Commissioners and Deputy-Commissioners as they found their work growing under their hands ; to decline civilly, but decidedly, the request of wives for their husbands, or of mothers for their sons, that he would give them appointments for which they were not competent ; to inculcate upon his subordinates his own salutary horror of jobs of every degree and every description, and to keep them as far as possible—as he had always kept himself till his health had broken down and the doctors told him that a change in his habits was essential to his stay in India—from gravitating, if I may so say, towards the hills, those delectable temptations, as he regarded them, to the neglect of work and duty ;—these were some of the subjects, perhaps, a tithe of the whole, with which the correspondence of the first few months shows he had to deal ; and they form, I think, a fair sample of his whole work and responsibilities as Chief Commissioner.

The only events in the Punjab or its dependencies which

involved any possible political complications during the first year or two of John Lawrence's Chief Commissionership, were a contest for the succession in the adjoining State of Bahawulpore, and the murder of Mackeson at Peshawur. How did he deal with them ?

Bahawulpore is an extensive tract of country to the south of the Sutlej, between the Punjab and Rajpootana, which, so far back as 1809, had acknowledged British supremacy, but had always retained its internal independence. The Nawab, who died at the end of 1852 had done us good service in the Second Sikh war, and it was by his special request that we recognised the succession of his third son Saadut Khan, to the exclusion of the eldest, Haji Khan. The elder brother, thanks, doubtless, to the humanity encouraged by the British connection, was saved from the fate which he would have suffered under similar circumstances, at any purely native court, and was only confined in prison. He soon escaped, and a civil war followed. The Chief Commissioner was at first disposed to prevent disturbances which would be likely to spread to the adjoining districts of the Punjab, by giving help to the younger brother ; but, finding that the Daoudputras, the dominant clan in the country, were in favour of the elder, wisely determined, with Lord Dalhousie's advice, to leave the matter to settle itself—as it usually does in the East—by the survival of the fittest. The elder brother gained the day ; and the Chief Commissioner then stepped in, on the plea of humanity alone, negotiated the release of the younger brother from prison and from death, and gave him an asylum at Lahore, on the understanding that he was never to revive his claims.

It was a trifling episode, but was managed with skill, and involved, as I am inclined to think, important consequences ; for it was the first instance of that wise non-interference with the internal affairs of neighbouring states which, henceforward, became a ruling principle of John Lawrence's policy, and to which he consistently adhered, even when, as in the case of Shere Ali, and the rival claimants to the Ameership of Afghanistan, it exposed him to the easy ridicule and the persistent hostility of those who would secure, or endanger, our Indian frontier by a series of aggressive or unnecessary wars beyond it. By non-interference in this instance he had

avoided a war and the still worse evil of forcing a ruler on unwilling subjects. In how many frontier wars should we have been, ere now, engaged, and how many puppet kings should we have placed upon neighbouring thrones, and then have seen dethroned again, had he adopted, and had the Governments of England and of India approved, of the contrary policy !

The tribes on our western frontier—partly because they were overawed by our conquest of their formidable oppressors, the Sikhs, and partly also because they were surprised and satisfied by our unaggressive attitude towards themselves—had, hitherto, given us much less trouble than the character of their country and the whole course of their history would have led us to expect. But barbarians are often ready to attribute forbearance and moderation—qualities of which they know so little themselves—to a consciousness of weakness ; and it was not till various tribes had essayed to cross our frontier and burn our villages, and had tested, to their cost, the adequacy of our frontier posts and frontier force, for purposes of offence as well as of defence, that they began to attribute our moderation to its true cause—a just, and wise, and consistent policy, based on the knowledge, not of our weakness, but of our strength. Most of these raids were repelled or punished at the cost of very few men and very little money. But Peshawur, surrounded as it was by hostile or lately subdued tribes on three sides, was still a standing source of anxiety.

Peshawur (wrote John Lawrence, on September the 1st) is unlike any other place, except, perhaps, Bunnoo. In these two districts all the people have been robbers and murderers from their cradles. It is not a section of the people with whom we have to deal ; it is the whole mass.

The letter had hardly been written when news came that Mackeson, the Commissioner of Peshawur, a first-rate soldier and a good political officer, had himself fallen a victim to the dagger of the assassin. A shoemaker by trade had come to the verandah in which Mackeson was holding Court on a dull dusty afternoon, had pretended to faint, had staggered towards the Commissioner, and had thrust his dagger into his right breast. There had been great sickness that year

among the troops at Peshawur. The garrison was, at that moment, reduced to one-third of its proper strength, and, in the alarm which naturally ensued, the deed of blood was put down to the instigation of the Ameer of Kabul, to the Akhund of Swat, and I know not how many potentates besides. Expeditions against all of them were talked of by irresponsible politicians in the cantonments and station of Peshawur. James, who had to 'officiate' as Commissioner of Peshawur in Mackeson's place, condemned the murderer to death without observing any of the forms of justice. Troops were ordered up by the military authorities from Wuzerabad to Rawul Pindi, and from Rawul Pindi to Peshawur, and then were counter-ordered before they reached their destination, to the great increase of the general confusion and alarm. A plot was discovered, or imagined, to seize the cantonments at Rawul Pindi when deserted by their proper garrison, and Nadir Khan, a discontented son of the Raja of Mandla, escaped to the hills, hoping to gather the hill-tribes round him.

But John Lawrence, who happened to be at Simla, kept his head; rebuked James sternly, by return of post, for his neglect of the rules of procedure, and for having yielded to the general panic; ordered the execution of the murderer to be put off till all legal forms had been duly complied with, and till some effort had been made to find out whether he had accomplices; suggested all the precautions in Peshawur and its neighbourhood which seemed really necessary, and was soon able to convince others, as he had already convinced himself, that, in a hotbed of fanaticism like Peshawur it was unnecessary to look for any prompting from Kabul or from Swat for such a deed.

The murderer was hanged, after his case had been duly reinvestigated, and his body was burned and his ashes scattered to the winds, to prevent the place of his burial being turned into a place of pilgrimage, and so, into an incitement to fresh murders, by the barbarous surrounding tribes. Edward Thornton's promptitude and courage enabled him, at the expense of a bullet-wound in the throat from a skulking foe, to overtake and capture Nadir Khan before any rising in the hills had taken place. Other reassuring measures produced their proper effect, and the

panic, which had, at one time, threatened to be a dangerous one, subsided almost as quickly as it had spread.

But the unsatisfactory state of things revealed by the murder of Mackeson, and its sequel, determined John Lawrence to go to Peshawur himself, that he might see with his own eyes how far the measures suggested by him, two years before, had been carried out, and that he might concert with the new Commissioner, whoever he might be, measures which might make life and property more secure, and attach the inhabitants to our rule.

The important and immediate question was, who the new Commissioner of Peshawur was to be. Lord Dalhousie had candidates of his own in view, and had, more than once, met the Chief Commissioner's recent recommendations with what the Chief Commissioner himself happily called 'an imperial No.' But this was an occasion on which John Lawrence could not afford to be modest, and, with all his earnestness and decision, he pressed on the Governor-General the pre-eminent claims of Herbert Edwardes for Peshawur, and of John Becher for Huzara.

The answer was that they might go there now, but it must be distinctly understood that their appointments were only temporary. But John Lawrence was not to be silenced, and his reply is interesting, partly, as giving his deliberate opinion of his distinguished subordinate—an opinion so abundantly justified by the result—partly, as showing, what I think has never been made public before, nor was known to the person most concerned, nor even to his biographer—that Lord Dalhousie's candidate for Peshawur was a man more distinguished still—the Bayard of India—the late Sir James Outram. There were obvious objections to such an appointment, which John Lawrence was not slow to urge, but it is not without interest to those who know the circumstances to speculate as to what might have been the result on the destinies of both men and both provinces had the most distinguished 'soldier political' of the Scinde frontier been transferred to the post of danger on that of the Punjab, and become subject to the control of the great Punjab civilian, who had so much of a soldier's heart. Would Sir James Outram, for instance, have been able, or would he have desired, to introduce into the Punjab frontier policy

any part of what was best in that of the rival province? Would he have been able, without entering on any aggressive wars, to have acquired over the untamed Afridis and Mohmunds any such influence as that which he had acquired over the more manageable and peaceful Beluchis and Bheels? Would, finally, the chivalrous defender of native princes and races everywhere have taken up the weapons which had dropped from Henry Lawrence's hand, and so have renewed the struggles of the Board; or would he have been able to work cordially with the modified views of his new master?

John Lawrence writes, on October 6, 1853:—

Lahore.

My Lord,—I feel grateful for the consideration which your letter displays, and the best return which I can make will be to state honestly and fully my views on the important point of naming a Commissioner for Peshawur.

I have already informed your Lordship that I consider that Edwardes would worthily fill the appointment. After thinking well over the subject, and comparing in my mind his qualities with those possessed by others, I have no hesitation in saying that I would much prefer to have him there. In original ability, and in education, he will bear comparison with any officer, civil or military, that I know. He has excellent judgment, good temper, force of character, and considerable knowledge of the natives. His military and political talents are considerable. He does not possess extensive civil experience, but has had two years' good training, which, to a man of his ability, is equal to double that period with most other people. He has had the advantage of seeing the working of the civil administration in all its details by having charge of a District which had been regularly settled and managed, and he has served under one of the ablest Commissioners (Donald Macleod) in India. When he left Jullundur, Macleod pronounced him to be the best District officer he had ever met with. Without subscribing to this opinion, I know few better ones; and, as a Commissioner, he would perhaps be more at home than even in charge of a District. Edwardes possesses broad views, a conciliatory and kindly disposition, and a natural aptitude for civil administration, which he admires. Such a man is more likely to reconcile the Peshawuris to our rule than any other who is available, while he has all the qualities to command the esteem of his military comrades, and the respect of the frontier tribes.

I have known him intimately for seven years, and we are on terms of the most affectionate intimacy. There is a considerable difference in our ages, and I am sure I possess much influence with him. My wishes and judgment are, therefore, strongly in his favour.

Edwardes' reputation has, no doubt, excited the jealousy of his own service, to which he is an honour; but that feeling has greatly lessened



since his return from England. He was much liked at Jullundur. He is, doubtless, a young soldier, but cannot be less than from thirty-two to thirty-three years old, and possesses sufficient military rank. . . .

As regards Outram, I feel much delicacy in even discussing his character. He is a fine soldier and a noble fellow; but he is much my senior in age, and has been accustomed to the highest charges. Such a man could not brook, not merely my control, which would be sufficiently irksome, but that of the Judicial and Financial Commissioners. It is not possible that he possesses any knowledge of civil administration. He has been bred in the political school altogether, and must, therefore, follow its received opinions. He will look to the feelings and prejudices of the higher classes, and not the interests of the mass of the people. No man can teach that which he does not know. Be his intentions what they may, he will naturally follow the bent of his own views and experience. That assiduous attention to the routine of administrative details, that prompt response to all references, however apparently trivial, and that exact attention to instructions, can only be secured in officers regularly trained to their duties.

We are strangers in language, colour, and religion to the people, who, beyond the Indus, are peculiarly intractable, fanatical, and warlike. To reconcile them to our rule requires the most careful and able management. The decision of every social question becomes of political importance. We require a light and equable land-tax, carefully distributed, that the influential and the cunning may not shift a portion of their burthen on to their humbler neighbours. We want a system of police which shall be prompt, resolute, and discriminating, but not oppressive; a form of procedure of the utmost simplicity, and, at the same time, so carefully guarded that the facilities for oppression shall be minimised; a judicial system stern and decided, but thoroughly intelligible. All these qualities it may be difficult to secure under the greatest precautions, but it is hopeless to find them in any system without the careful training of our officers. . . .

Having now said my say, I can only add that, on whomsoever your Lordship's choice may fall, I will do all I can to make his position easy and to facilitate business.

It is hardly necessary to say that representations so forcible were met, on this occasion, by an 'imperial' Yes, and Edwardes was at once gazetted Commissioner of Peshawur. Before the middle of the month, John Lawrence had set out to join him there. His intention was to settle, in concert with him, so far as they admitted of an immediate settlement, the many burning questions at Peshawur: to improve the defences of the frontier, to suggest alterations in the composition of the garrison, to coerce the Afridis and other barbarous tribes who had broken their engagements and menaced our possession of the Kohat pass, and,

finally, to clear off the arrears left by Mackeson—among other things ‘twenty-four sessions cases a year and upwards old!’ This done, he proposed to visit Mooltan, a part of the Punjab which, strange as it may seem, he had never yet seen, and which he had reason to believe was much behind the rest of the country in organisation and development. Thence, he was to travel up the whole length of the Derajat to Peshawur, again inspecting all the frontier posts and forts, and judging for himself of the success of the administration, and of the condition of the people in each district. This programme, extensive as it was, he carried out to the letter.

John Lawrence arrived at Peshawur on October 31, but found that so large a number of the garrison there were still prostrate with sickness, that none could be spared to join him in coercing the hostile Afridis of the two passes which lead thence to the famous Kohat valley. But he found plenty of other work to do. He inspected, in company with Robert Napier, the fortifications of the town. He endeavoured to press on to its completion that remote portion of the Grand Trunk Road, by applying to Golab Sing for the help of 500 Kashmiris. He spent the mornings of each day, from a very early hour up to noon, in exploring the surrounding country, and the afternoons in clearing off the sessions cases of a year’s standing left by Mackeson, ‘all of them,’ observes John Lawrence, ‘desperate fellows.’ He built the long-talked-of fort at the entrance of the Kohat pass, as a means of coercing the Afridis of that pass; and he made one more effort for peace by sending for the Mulliks of the Afridis belonging to the other pass, and, after three days of consultation with them, succeeded in bringing them to terms.

But there was one clan among them—the Bori Afridis—who were not so amenable to reason. They inhabited a cluster of villages in the interior of the hills, supposed to be impregnable. During the last two years, they had made many raids into the Peshawur valley, had harboured twenty-four outlaws of the Rawul Pindi district, had furnished them with horses for the express purpose of robbery and murder, and had repeatedly carried off British subjects, whom they still held to ransom. The Chief Commissioner demanded that the prisoners should be set free, the plunder restored,

and the horses of the robber band surrendered. The demand was flatly refused, and the Boris sent a message to him bidding him to do his worst. This was too much for the Chief Commissioner. His old military ardour was aroused. He had a just cause and, what was not likely to occur again in his lifetime, a chance of planning and directing military operations himself.

An elaborate plan for attacking the mountaineers simultaneously at very different points, so as to inflict more signal retribution and produce more lasting effect, was prepared by him in person and was approved of, to his great delight, by such good soldiers as Norman, Lumsden, Cotton, and James, and was only given up when it was found that General Roberts, who was then in command at Peshawur, and who will be known to posterity chiefly as the father of his illustrious son, Lord Roberts, was still unable to supply the contingent which was necessary. 'Well,' said John, 'if we cannot do all we want, at least we will do all we can.' And he sent off at once for the Guides from Hoti Murdan, whose presence would raise the troops at his own disposal to 1,300 men. Coke, 'a fine plucky soldier, positive and opinionated, but honest and straightforward,' was still for trying other measures, but the Chief Commissioner stood firm. 'An example,' he said, 'is absolutely necessary. I think] that I have, long enough, given up my own plans to assist yours, and that the time has come to resume the former. . . . I hold to my plan to attack Bori on Tuesday. I am not to be dissuaded from it on any account.' The attack was accordingly made on November 29, and with the result which he described, on the following day, in a spirited letter to Lord Dalhousie.

November 30, 1853.

My dear Lord,—I write a line to say that we, yesterday, crossed the low range and entered the valley in which the Bori Afridis are, destroyed their villages, and came out the same day. We were out in this affair sixteen hours; so it was a very hard day's work for the troops. We had a splendid little force: Guides, 450; Ghoorkas, 400; Europeans, 400; Native Infantry, 20. The Afridis fought desperately, and the mode in which the Guides and the Ghoorkas crowned the heights which commanded the villages was the admiration of every officer present. These are, indeed, the right sort of fellows. Our loss is eight men killed and twenty-four wounded. The men got no water and suffered a good deal.

I think this expedition is calculated to do much good. The Bori valley has not been entered by an enemy for many hundred years, I believe, and the *prestige* which will attend the affair will be proportioned to the success of the operation. The Afridis of the lower hills at the mouth of the pass behaved extremely well. They sat on the heights around, but did not fire a shot.

After an inspection of the frontier forts to the north of Peshawur, the Chief Commissioner returned, by December 9, to Lahore, that he might spend a few days with his family before the second great break in it occurred. Three of his children—his two eldest sons, John and Henry, and his third daughter, Alice Margaret—he was obliged to send to England. But as in the case of his two eldest daughters, some kind friends—Mr. and Mrs. Charles Saunders, of Umritsur—volunteered to escort them, and, a few days after their departure, John Lawrence and his wife, with the one child, a baby, who was now left to them, were glad to exchange their desolate home at Lahore, which he 'found insupportable,' for the excitement of camp life and the tour to Mooltan and the Derajat.

At Mooltan, he examined, with a soldier's interest, the spots made famous by the murders of Agnew and Anderson, by the daring deeds of Edwardes, and by the chequered but ultimately successful siege. Then, passing through a wild and uncleared country, in which he found, to his surprise and disgust, that thefts and burglary and cattle-stealing were still very common, he reached Dera Ghazi Khan. Here he left the ladies of his party—his wife and Mrs. Macpherson, the wife of his indefatigable Military Secretary—and, with his horse and a small camp, dropped down the river to Mitthancote, the southern extremity of his province, and the point where the Indus receives in one stream of hardly less volume than its own the united waters of the five rivers of the Punjab. Thence he marched back again, along the frontier posts and forts, to Dera Ghazi Khan, where he received a visit from a wild Khatteran chieftain, Haji Khan, a man who came from far beyond our frontier, and had 'never seen a European before,' but offered to forward him letters from Kandahar—which might be of importance in view of the Russian war just then

breaking out—and even volunteered to join us in an expedition against the formidable Murris !

Lord Dalhousie, in reply to John Lawrence's letter detailing the circumstances of this interview, writes :—

Perhaps you may make something of Haji Khan Khatteran. By the way, as this man had never seen a European before, it was very politic of you to show *yourself* to him as the first specimen of the conquering race ! I have no doubt he will be as desirous to retain a recollection of you as I am, and as I have lately taken the liberty of showing. For I have to apologise to you for getting a daguerreotype taken from the portrait of you which Mr. C. Saunders brought down. It was exceedingly like, and I have great pleasure in possessing it. You will pardon, I hope, my taking it without leave.

During the whole of this period, John Lawrence was much occupied by troubles connected with the famous Hodson, who was in command of the Guides. The correspondence, as a whole, shows convincingly with what forbearance John Lawrence treated Hodson, how he appreciated his soldier-like qualities, and his varied talents, how he bore with his shortcomings, and how unwilling he was, so long as he could possibly do otherwise, to believe the worst of him. It was very slowly and reluctantly that he came to that belief : all the more slowly, I am persuaded, from his chivalrous desire to stand by a man whom, in his earlier and better days, his brother Henry had taken under his patronage. John Lawrence did not know then what many of his friends knew well enough—for Sir Henry had told them so himself—that his brother had ceased to believe in Hodson's integrity as regards money matters, from the time when he had accompanied him in his tour to Kashmere and had found himself in command of the money-chest there. That Hodson had many fine and engaging qualities, to begin with, is certain, and that his moral decline was gradual is also certain.

Hodson had been appointed to the command of the Guides by Lord Dalhousie, and, with John Lawrence's approval, had received, at the same time, the civil charge of the Eusofzye district. It was the post of all others which he had coveted, and which seemed to give the best opening to his splendid qualities as a soldier. It is certain,

therefore, that, in September 1852, when he received the command, neither Lord Dalhousie nor John Lawrence can have had any prejudice against him. He had hardly entered on his duties when complaints began to pour in, from both soldiers and civilians, of arbitrary and oppressive treatment; and as early as March 22, 1853, I find John Lawrence writing thus to Courtenay:—

Hodson is, I believe, very unpopular, both in the Guides and with military men generally. I don't know exactly why this is. It cannot be that he has got promotion too early; for, though a young soldier, he is almost a middle-aged man. He is an officer of first-rate ability, and has received an excellent education. He is gallant, zealous, and intelligent, and yet few men like him. It is the case of the famous Dr. Fell, whom the young lady did not like, but could not tell why she did not do so.

John Lawrence would not have acted like himself if he had heard of these complaints and had not tried to remove their cause, and the letter of which I quote a few sentences is, again, anything but unfriendly in its tone:—

August 7, 1853.

As regards the general feeling of the regiment to yourself, you must not be hurt at what I say, for I do it simply and solely for your own good. You may depend on it that neither the European nor the native officers are as *razi* (contented) as they might be. I have heard it from half-a-dozen different quarters. At Lahore I have heard it talked of by several parties. I have heard it direct from Peshawur and direct from Calcutta. There may have been faults on their part, and the discipline may not have been altogether what it ought to have been. But sudden changes are best avoided. The corps got a great name under Lumsden, who was beloved, I may say, for even his very defects, to say nothing of his virtues. If right men go wrong, people will blame you. I don't think that Pathans can bear a very strict system of drill and setting up at any time. For all these reasons, therefore, I would introduce my reforms very slowly and carefully, carrying them out in a way as little vexatious as possible.

What I write is for your private ear alone. I wish you to take counsel of me, not to repeat what I write, which will only make matters worse. I heard that you addressed Futteh Khan as Futteh Khan *Mazool* (turned out); this was sufficient to set such a chap all of a blaze.

The next extract indicates that the tension was becoming greater.

Camp Mooltan: February 2, 1854.

My dear Hodson,—Why don't you send a reply to official requisitions? What is to become of you if you will not answer letters? It will not be practicable to carry on work. I hear that you say you work night and day, but at what I can't think! A clever fellow like you ought to have little difficulty in getting through business with proper despatch.

I want a reply to the reference about native officers being appointed and dismissed by the commandant of the Guides. I cannot reply to a reference from Government until I get it.

There is another matter about which Melvill wrote. I allude to my brother's Kashmere accounts. If you cannot give the information asked for, why not say so? If you can, let me have it. Every month's delay makes the adjustment of them more difficult. . . .

What are you doing with Kader Khan's son in limbo? What has *he* to do with the acts of his father? Why is not Kader Khan brought to trial before the Commissioner?

The next extract indicates greater tension still.

Dera Ismael Khan: March 9, 1854.

My dear Hodson,—Read the enclosed memo., and tell me when you intend giving the information. It is now nearly six months since you were asked to report on the appointment and dismissal of officers in your corps. Now it is not reasonable to suppose that matters can work well if you thus delay to furnish information required of you. Besides the official reminders, I have written once privately, but with no result. I want you to clearly understand that, if we are to work together, which I sincerely hope we shall do, you must make up your mind to obey punctually all requisitions. It will not answer to say that you are overwhelmed with arrears and the like. I see you have time to answer letters when you like. So pray make up your mind to reply to all in due course. This is the last time that I shall write thus on this subject.

But, soon, other and more painful questions, connected with the account-books of his regiment and his pecuniary dealings generally, came to the front. It is impossible to go fully into the case here, but a long string of letters shows that John Lawrence, if, sometimes, he could not help fearing the worst, was always anxious to hope for the best respecting them. I quote one extract. It is a sufficient answer to the imputations attempted to be thrown upon John Lawrence and his subordinates throughout the book called 'Twelve Years of a Soldier's Life.'

June 27, 1855.

The delay in disposing of your case has not been caused by me, nor have I, in the slightest degree, said or done aught to injure your char-

acter. I have wished that your case should be disposed of by the court composed of your brother officers. But I may truly add that I have often expressed an opinion that nothing injurious to your character as a gentleman would be proved. I have believed, and still believe, that irregularities, procrastination, and general mismanagement were the main faults of which you were guilty. An officer may be culpable without being criminal. He may have done nothing dishonourable, and yet be deemed unfit to command a corps like the Guides. . . . I have written this letter in reply to your note, because my silence might have been misconstrued. It is with regret that I have said anything to give you pain, and, for the future, I would rather not discuss the merits of your case. If you think that further inquiry would benefit your cause, you should, I think, ask for it from the Commander-in-Chief.

The Court of Inquiry, after protracted examination, arrived at conclusions which were very unfavourable to Hodson's character, and which no subsequent investigation, such as that of Major Reynell Taylor, which was conducted under wholly different conditions and had reference to a portion only of the charges, could seriously invalidate. The papers were duly forwarded to Lord Dalhousie for his decision, but before he had time to go through them, Hodson became involved in another trouble which brought matters to a crisis. It was not, therefore, as has been commonly supposed, upon the charge of malversation that Hodson lost the command of the Guides. It was for his cruel and arbitrary treatment of a rich native chief, named Kader Khan, who is alluded to in one of the above letters. Lord Dalhousie, to whom the case was reported, deprived him of his military command and of his civil charge. 'Lieutenant Hodson's case,' he says (September 26, 1855), 'has been lately before me. It is as bad as possible, and I have been compelled to remand him to his regiment with much regret, for he is a gallant soldier and an able man.' The Court of Directors at home, taking an even more serious view of his conduct, gave an order that, under no circumstances, should he receive any other command. He thus disappeared from the Punjab, but he was to come to the front again, in the crisis of the Mutiny—a time which was likely to bring out, as we shall see hereafter that it did, some of his very finest and some of his very worst qualities.

From Rawul Pindi, where the steps taken by Edward



Thornton, the Commissioner, for placing his civil station, his jails, his cutcherries, and the cantonments, all in close proximity to each other, earned John Lawrence's warm approval, he went with his wife and daughter, who were, both of them, ill from the fatigue and exposure of this Derajat march, to the new hill station of Murri. It was his first visit to the place, but it was by no means to be his last; for the orders of his doctors, and the urgent representations of Lord Dalhousie as to what was due, if not to himself, at least to the public good, constrained him, henceforward, to spend a considerable part of each hot season there. His reluctance to comply with the requests of friends and doctors, and even of the Governor-General, will appear natural enough when we recollect the stern restraint he had always hitherto placed on his own inclinations, as well as on those of his subordinates, to avail themselves, during the fury of the summer, of those 'delectable mountains' which looked down so invitingly from the north. It was an uphill and a thankless struggle, which he could not afford to abandon now, merely because times had changed with him and because it would seem doubly ungracious to refuse to others what he accepted for himself. His subordinates often thought him unreasonably stern in this matter, but the struggle was generally carried on with good temper on both sides, and no one ever questioned his public spirit or the sincerity of his convictions.

The Chief Commissioner's own work went on unremittingly at Murri, in the house of three small rooms which sufficed for his simple wants and those of his wife. 'I have been very busy,' he writes on June 3: 'my pen scarcely ever out of my hand. Certainly writing long reports is very wearisome, and my eyes are not what they used to be. I fear, if I live to be fifty, I shall be blind.' A few days previously, on May 27, a fourth son—Charles Napier—had been born, and, as soon as the mother was sufficiently recovered for him to leave her, the father slipped away to Lahore. But it was a liberty for which he soon had to pay the penalty, for he was attacked by a severe fever which put his life in danger. His medical attendants were, at first, afraid to resort to their usual remedy of bleeding, and it was only at his own urgent request that they consented to open a vein in his arm. This relieved

his head, but the positive orders of his doctors and his extreme weakness warned him to make his way back to Murri as soon as possible. The concern of Lord Dalhousie when he heard of his Lieutenant's narrow escape was extreme, and his warning against similar escapades for the future, will illustrate what I have said about the hills :—

September 7.

Murri, I hope, will restore you fully and at once. Next year you must on no account come down into the plains after the hot weather begins. Whatever you do, or leave undone, pray keep your health.

And, again, two days later—

I now regret very sincerely that I did not urge you strongly against quitting Murri to return to Lahore during the heat. But your health has, of late, been so good that the thought of risk to it during this temporary visit to the plains did not present itself to me at the time. I can now only repeat the injunctions which I laid upon you in my last letter, that, next summer, you are to take advantage of the hill stations, so numerous in every part of your jurisdiction, and are not again to risk your health, on which so much of the public interest depends. For the present I would urge you to take *complete rest*, if you can—at any rate, as far as you can—until your health and strength are again revived. Never mind the Punjab Report, or any other report, but coddle yourself, turn idler, and get yourself up again.

It was during this visit to Lahore that John Lawrence was able to effect a change which he had long desired, which relieved him of a cruel amount of work and worry, and gave him a coadjutor whose ready pen had already done him good service, and who was, in the capacity of his Secretary, for many years to come, to be on the most intimate terms with him. How this came about requires explanation. On the first establishment of the Board, Lord Dalhousie, in a moment of apparent aberration, had appointed Philip Melvill to be its Under-Secretary. He was a man of ability and education, and always pleasant to deal with, but, as the result showed, he proved to be quite unfitted by his training and aptitudes for this particular post. Christian, the Secretary who had been selected by the Board, had, after a very short term of service, gone back to the North-West ; and then in a second, and less excusable moment of aberration,

tion, Lord Dalhousie had given Melvill his place. Thus the post, of all others in the Punjab, which ought to have been left entirely in the hands of the Board, was the very one—and almost the only one—in the filling up of which they had not been allowed to have any voice.

In June 1851, as I have already related, John Lawrence had paid a visit to Lord Dalhousie at Simla, had there met Richard Temple, then a very young civilian, and, stopping at Jullundur, on his way back, had examined the work done by him as settlement officer of the district. 'Here is the very man,' he said in conversation with his friends, 'that we want as Secretary. He can understand what I say, and put it into first-rate form. But what can we do? Melvill has been put upon us for ever by Lord Dalhousie.' And, writing shortly afterwards to the Governor-General himself, he thus expresses his opinion of the work which he had examined: 'Young Temple has just finished the settlement at Jullundur; and, during the fifteen months he has been there, has not only worked in first-rate style, but has done an amount of work which scarcely any other three men in the country could have done. He is pre-eminently the most rising officer in the Punjab.'

Unfortunately, this 'most rising officer in the Punjab' had been, soon afterwards, recalled to the North-West by Thomason; but, on the urgent representation of John Lawrence that a new country must require Temple's energy more than an old one, Thomason consented to surrender him, and Temple was forthwith appointed to the revenue settlement of the Rechna Doab. Passing through Lahore, in January, 1853, on his way to his new post, he saw there, for the first time, 'the great triumvirate,' and often 'danced before Herod,' as his future chief used to describe his frequent visits to him. He worked in the Rechna Doab as hard as he had worked in the Jullundur, and when Lord Dalhousie suggested that a Report should be drawn up, showing what had been done in the Punjab since annexation, the thoughts of the members instinctively turned towards him. The duty properly belonged to Melvill, who tried his hand at it. But the results of his efforts were so inadequate, that by general consent—that of Lord Dalhousie as well as of the Board, a *deus ex machina* was called in, in the shape of

the young settlement officer. The summons reached Temple late in the evening : and, that same night, he rode down from Shekarghur to Lahore, a distance of seventy or eighty miles, fording many swollen streams in his way. The ride was characteristic of the man, and was, in itself, likely to recommend him still more strongly to his future chief.

The task before Temple was delicate and difficult. Portions of the Report had been already written by Henry, portions also by John. The susceptibilities of Lord Dalhousie, as well as of each of the three members of the Board, had to be consulted, and this, as all alike were anxious to impress upon him, without the slightest sacrifice of truth. However, the task was accomplished, and in a manner which made its publication to be almost an epoch in the literary history of India. At all events, it was an epoch in the way in which that history could be regarded by outsiders. It is not too much to say that, before its appearance, no document of the kind had ever been read extensively, either in India or in England. Such reports as had been published were unreadable and almost unintelligible, thickly interlarded with Hindustani and Persian words, and the whole put together in the most forbidding shape. Temple thus proved to be the *vates sacer*, without whom much that the Lawrences had done might have remained unrecorded and unknown beyond the pigeon-holes of a Government office, or the limits of the province which was immediately affected.

Temple had done the Secretary's work, but he was not yet to be Secretary ; and even when the Board was abolished and was succeeded by a Chief Commissioner, the Governor-General still refused to sanction any change. In vain did John Lawrence write to Courtenay and to Lord Dalhousie, representing the vast amount of unnecessary work and worry which was thus thrown upon him, and begging that a Residency, or any other post which was suitable to his abilities, might be given to Melvill. In the period of the Board he had had to do much of the Secretary's work as well as his own. And now, to make matters worse, the offer which was made to Temple by Colvin of a high post at Agra, made it likely that the man on whom he had set his heart as his future secretary, would, after all, be permanently withdrawn from the Punjab. He treated the matter, however, with

characteristic magnanimity. 'Temple,' he wrote to Courtenay, 'is the man whom I have long wished for as Secretary in Melvill's room, if only I could have helped the latter to a snug berth. As I cannot do this, I hope the Governor-General will let Temple go ; for it is hard to prevent an able man getting on, merely because one wants him oneself.' But the Governor-General peremptorily refused permission ; and the death of Melvill, which happened soon afterwards—a man for whom John Lawrence had always felt a great regard, and had treated throughout with exemplary patience, and even tenderness—at last gave Temple the opening for which he was so well fitted.

It was in July 1854, shortly before the severe attack of fever which I have described, that Temple arrived to enter on his work. What was said and done at the first meeting between the two men I am able to relate on the best authority, and it is highly characteristic. 'John Lawrence,' said Temple to me in conversation, 'was very ill with headache, lying down in a dark room, and much depressed. Hearing me enter the outer room, he called out abruptly, "So glad you are come ; just look at those letters ;" and said no more. In the afternoon he was better, and able to leave his room. "Very glad," he said, "to have got you in your proper place at last ! I am glad of your opinion, and, of course, very glad of your pen ; but remember, it will be *my* policy, and *my* views : not yours. Your day may come—it is mine now ; every dog will have its day." 'He seemed,' remarks Sir Richard Temple, 'to be unapproachably beyond me then, and so still he does ; but, in one sense, his words came true, for I have filled offices similar to his since.'

The relief given to the overworked Chief Commissioner by the appointment of Temple as his Secretary was instantaneous. Without it, he used often to say that he must soon have broken down altogether. Where, formerly, he would have been obliged to write out a document, or an answer to a letter, in full, if he wished it to be adequately done, he was now able,—as all hard-worked public men ought to be able,—to scribble down a line or two across it, and feel sure that his Secretary would catch his meaning, and express it in accurate and appropriate language. Temple's eagerness for work, and aptitude for getting through it, exactly suited

him. They worked together in perfect harmony—harmony which could not fail sometimes to rouse the indignation or the anger of applicants for places, for which they were not judged to be fit, or of subordinates who, for some reason or other, had incurred the displeasure of their chief, and would not be satisfied without a personal interview. It might have been possible, they thought, to deal with the Chief Commissioner alone—for sometimes even the bull in the arena, after scattering his foes this way and that by his irresistible charge, received a sly or a disabling thrust from the least worthy of his assailants ; but it was impossible to get over the two men together—the strong-fisted chief who knew his mind so clearly, and that ‘detestable Secretary,’ who sat there, not speaking a word himself, but catching the drift of all his chief’s words and thoughts, and then writing them down in ‘Templetonian’ English.

## CHAPTER XIV.

RELATIONS WITH HIS CHIEF AND HIS SUBORDINATES.  
1854-1856.

THE almost exclusive attention which the Chief Commissioner had been able, during the first eighteen months of his rule, to give to the internal progress of the Punjab, had been interrupted, to some extent, during the last few months by the Crimean war and by the complications to which it was feared it might give rise on the north-western frontier. John Lawrence, as his letters show, had watched closely the steps which led up to that war, and to the intervention of England and France ; and when Lord Dalhousie, in deference to the anxieties of the authorities at home, bade him, half humorously and half seriously, 'be on the look-out for Prince Menschikoff in the Khyber,' the warning was re-echoed by Herbert Edwardes, who recommended that immediate overtures should be made by us to the Ameer of Afghanistan for a treaty of alliance, and that we should furnish him with money and warlike materials. Lord Dalhousie was, at first, inclined to agree with Edwardes, but was strongly resisted by John Lawrence. A few extracts from his letters will show how, even at this early period, John Lawrence inclined towards that frontier policy which he ever afterwards advocated.

*To Courtenay.*

January 7, 1854.

I am looking out sharp towards Kabul. If the war continues, Russia will no doubt intrigue there. But intrigue can do little or nothing unless a Russo-Persian army invade Afghanistan. I see not what is on the cards. If such an invasion do take place it will unite the Afghans together against them. Let us only be strong on this side the passes,

and we may laugh at all that goes on in Kabul. I would waste neither men nor money beyond. If the Persians attack the Turks we might make a diversion in the Persian Gulf, as Lord Auckland did some years ago, by occupying the island of Karrack, or some such name, and threatening a descent.

The letter which details his objections to Edwardes' proposal for an alliance with the Afghans, in the shape it then bore, is of more than passing interest.

Camp Subki, near Bunnoo, March 24, 1854.

My dear Lord,—I have, this day, received from Edwardes a copy of his letter of the 20th to your Lordship. I do not coincide in his views on the conduct of Dost Mohammed Khan of Kabul since the last war. . . . I fully believe, however, that the Ameer is willing to be on terms of amity with us just now. It would greatly strengthen his position and the chances in favour of his sons being able to maintain themselves at his death. It would also enable him to turn his undivided attention to other quarters. Such friendly relations would, no doubt, be useful to us in tending to maintain the peace of the border; but they are not essential. We can hold our own against all comers. The satisfaction that a treaty would give in England appears to me the strongest argument in favour of the measure.

There seems, however, to be nothing in the present aspect of affairs in Europe which should induce us to adopt the extreme measure of making overtures to the Ameer. I do not think that we could do this without loss of dignity and prestige both at Kabul and in India. All thinking men would say that it must, indeed, be a terrible crisis—Russia must be a frightful foe—when the Lords of the East—the English—backed by France and Turkey, hold out, in this fashion, the right hand of fellowship to Kabul! We may satisfy ourselves, but we shall never satisfy others, that such a course is not dictated by a consciousness of weakness; and this knowledge will induce the Ameer to make claims which to us are inadmissible. . . . By the last news from Europe I judge that Russia must succumb; she cannot pretend to fight all Europe banded together against her. But supposing she does go to war, she will have full employment at home. Beyond intrigue she can attempt nothing in Central Asia. But such intrigues, Major Edwardes thinks, will only oblige the Ameer to turn to us. In that case, why not wait till he does? . . .

Foujdar Khan is a man of character and ability, and a well-wisher of ours. I do not know a native who might be more safely entrusted with our views and objects than he. But I am not prepared to recommend that it is politic to send any native to Kabul with a message from the British Government. *I do not think that a European officer could go there with safety. The Ameer would no doubt deal fairly, but there are many who would be glad to destroy the Mission, if it were only to bring Dost Mohammed into disgrace. . . .*



I would simply recommend that we give the Ameer to understand, indirectly, that we are willing to forget the past and enter into friendly relations, should he desire it. In the event of his making such proposals, a native gentleman, such as Foujdar Khan, might go to Jellalabad or Ali Musjid to meet and conduct his son to Peshawur, with whom the treaty might be concluded by your Lordship in person, if the time suited, or by such parties as you might name.

Lord Dalhousie's reply of April 11 is also important, and I subjoin an extract from it :—

My dear Lawrence,—I have received your several letters. It is very true that a treaty with Kabul would not be binding any longer than the Ameer chose to observe it. It is very true that the Afghans are naturally enemies to Russia and Persia ; it is very true that we spent a great deal of money at Herat to little profit ; it is very true that, even if the Russians were in Afghanistan, we are able to keep them out of India, —all this is very true ; nevertheless, my good friend, you may take my word for it that it is wise for us to have regard to public opinion beyond the Five Rivers, and that—regard being had to public opinion in other parts of the world—it is wise for us to make some exertion, and even some sacrifice, to obtain a *general* treaty with the Ameer, in the present aspect of the world's affairs. Wherefore I do not quite go with you when you lay down that, in no circumstances, should we make any move until a direct overture shall have been received from the Dost. However, it is unnecessary to discuss that question now, because the proposal of Nazir Khairullah, which Edwardes has demiofficially reported, raises every apparent probability that some letters will be received from the Dost. . . . The Maharaja (Duleep Sing) is here, and sails on the 19th. He has grown a good deal, speaks English well, has a good manner, and altogether will, I think, do us credit in England, if they do not spoil him there.

Yours sincerely,

DALHOUSIE.

‘Having said my say,’ John Lawrence replied to this letter, ‘on the proposed negotiations with Kabul, I am prepared, as in duty bound, to carry out your views with all my heart.’ But Dost Mohammed did not, at once, respond to the advances made to him. Like a true Oriental, he considered haste unbecoming or impolitic, and John Lawrence was able to convince his chief as well as his lieutenant at Peshawur, who were both anxious for the alliance, that over-eagerness on their part might defeat the object which they had in view.

Late in the autumn of 1854, the long-expected letter of

the Ameer arrived—'a very humble and civil one,' as Lord Dalhousie calls it. In a subsequent letter, received in January, he proposed to send one of his sons to Jumrood to negotiate the treaty, and particularly begged that John Lawrence, the Englishman of whom he had heard so much, might come to meet him in person and act as the English representative. John Lawrence had been anxious to leave the whole credit which was likely to result from the conclusion of a treaty of which he did not wholly approve, to his friend the Commissioner of Peshawur, who had started the idea and approved of it thoroughly. But the request of the Dost left him, as Lord Dalhousie pointed out, no choice in the matter. He had to turn diplomatist for the nonce, and was able, by his skilful management of the negotiations and the successful conclusion of the treaty, to prove that diplomacy is not necessarily trickery, and that the diplomatist who uses words not to conceal his thoughts, but to express them in the most unmistakable manner, is quite as likely to gain his point—especially in dealing with Orientals who can always beat a European at the game of trickery—as the veriest Talleyrand or Metternich.

John Lawrence and his wife, after spending Christmas at Lahore, started for Peshawur, and, accompanied by Edwardes, by the two Chamberlains, and by an ample retinue, moved out from thence on March 18, to Jumrood, the advanced outpost of our dominions, in order that they might receive the heir-apparent to the Ameer of Afghanistan with becoming dignity. On the 20th, he was received in full Durbar in the cantonments at Peshawur; and, on the morning of the 23rd, business began.

Gholam Hyder Khan, the son and representative of the great Ameer whom we had treated so ill, was a remarkable personage in more ways than one. He possessed considerable intelligence, and 'for an Afghan chief was very well informed.' He thought and spoke for himself, and was able to keep his followers under excellent control. He had been much in India, and, having been detained there as a prisoner during the Afghan war, had managed to make friends with several British officers, and he now prided himself on recalling the places or the things which he had seen during his travels. He recognised the Chamberlains, and treated

them as old friends. He wore English shoes, rode on an English saddle, and was particularly pleased with an English sword and revolver which John Lawrence gave him. He walked through Major Edwardes' house and examined the pictures and furniture, pointing out such articles as he approved and explaining their merits to his Sirdars. He insisted on giving John Lawrence, in return for the sword and revolver, a favourite horse—he had probably discovered the weakness of his host for that animal—and when his host asked to be allowed to send it back, he replied that, in that case, he would shoot it. His chief personal characteristic was his extreme obesity, which made it difficult for him to ride or to bear any physical fatigue. 'He has weak eyes,' says John Lawrence, 'and wears goggles; he cannot sleep at night, and is bled regularly every two months. He has to drink water frequently during our negotiations. He is only thirty-seven years of age, but the civil surgeon of the station, whom he called in to prescribe for him, says that his life is not worth six months' purchase, that he may die any day from apoplexy, and that in any case he cannot live long.' Yet he pressed for the insertion of his name in the treaty, as heir-apparent to his father, with as much earnestness as if he were counting upon a long life, or was foolish enough to hope that his recognition by the English would avail aught in the struggle for power and life which was sure to follow his father's death. Such were some of the characteristics of the man with whom the Chief Commissioner was to have so much intercourse during the next ten days.

It was arranged, on John Lawrence's proposition, that they should meet without *vahils*, personages 'who were only likely to make or increase difficulties; ' that the Chief Commissioner was to be accompanied by Edwardes only, and the heir-apparent by three or four of his most trusted Sirdars; and that the conferences should take place alternately in the Afghan camp and in the house of the Commissioner of Peshawur. I take from John Lawrence's letters the gist of some of the more interesting passages in the negotiations.

The Chief Commissioner began the conversation by saying that the Governor-General desired nothing but a treaty of mutual amity, but that, if the Dost desired more, his son had better state what his wishes were.

'We are brave and warlike, but we are very poor,' replied the heir-apparent; 'we shall offend the Russians and Persians by making a treaty with you, and we hope therefore that you will grant us something by way of *parwarish* (favour). With money, we are a match for anybody; without it, we can do little. Herat is one with us, but it is on the frontier of Persia, and is the highway of Russia. If the Persians and Russians attack it, as they probably will, will you stand unconcernedly aloof and say it's no business of yours?'

The Chief Commissioner replied that he did not anticipate any danger of the kind. 'We had made a treaty with Persia, which warned her not to attack the countries lying between herself and India; and as for the Russians, they had plenty to do in Europe, nor was it likely that we, who were fighting them there, would wish to see them attack the Afghans.'

'Persia,' retorted Hyder Khan, 'adjoins Russia; she does not love Russia, but fears her, and must do her bidding. The Afghans, if united, as, by the blessing of God they now are, have nothing to fear from Persia, unless Russia join her. If Russia has really no designs on India, why does she attack Khokand? why has she seized Ak Musjid and cantoned her troops there?'

'We can always stop Persia,' replied the Chief Commissioner, 'by a counter-demonstration on her coast; and we do not wish to offend her needlessly by saying anything about Herat in the treaty.'

'Persia,' rejoined Hyder Khan, 'is not quite so considerate for your feelings as you appear to be of hers. I can show you a copy of a treaty she has proposed to make with us against you, if you should interfere in Afghanistan.'

'That,' said the Chief Commissioner, 'is mere talk on the part of Persia.'

'Yes,' said Hyder Khan, 'talk and insolence. But after Persia and Afghanistan have for centuries plundered Hindustan, it is no wonder if Persia is alarmed at seeing such a revulsion of fortune as Hindustan flowing back, year by year, towards Khorassan. But we should like to know what you mean by Afghanistan—its present or its former limits?'

This was, of course, a feeler towards Peshawur, the place

which John Lawrence himself, then and ever afterwards, thought a source of weakness to us. But his answer was decided. 'The present boundaries of Afghanistan are, of course, those which will be maintained. We have no desire to interfere in Afghanistan, nor will we allow you to interfere with us. Our only object in making a treaty is one of mutual assurance, so that the border tracts may be at peace, and agriculture and commerce flourish. Your ruler will get a larger revenue and will be better able to resist his enemies when he is assured on the side of Peshawur.'

'Yes,' said Hyder Khan, 'we shall have nothing to fear from our other enemies, if they are not helped by Russia. As for Bokhara, we have old scores to pay off on her, as you have. Has not the Shah of Bokhara slain Stoddart Sahib and Conolly Sahib? Has he not also killed some of my own relations? We will go and punish him. An Afghan compared to a Turcoman is like a wolf compared to a sheep.'

The Chief Commissioner hereupon assured his friend that we had no designs upon Afghanistan, but only desired her to be strong and independent. The interests of the two States were in fact identical; they were in one boat.

'Well, then,' replied Hyder Khan with vivacity, 'if we are in one boat we must sink or swim together. Promise to assist us, or your successor may not know what you have said, and will stand aloof in the time of danger.' So ended the first interview.

On the following day, the question of Herat again came up, and John Lawrence again dwelt on our engagement with Persia.

'Herat,' Hyder Khan replied, 'is the right arm of Afghanistan. Look at his hand,'—pointing to the Commissioner of Peshawur's wounded hand; 'did it not grieve him to lose its use? Thus it would pain us to lose Herat. If it be attacked, we must go to its aid. If the treaty is to benefit us, Herat should be included.'

John Lawrence was not empowered, nor would he have wished, to yield the point, because of the complications it would certainly involve; but he offered to give in writing some extracts from Edmonstone's letter of instructions, which would show what our wishes were on the matter; and Hyder Khan then yielded the point with a good grace.

The next question raised must have been interesting to the Chief Commissioner from a family as well as from a public point of view, for Mohammed Khan, to whom the Ameer requested us to restore his former fiefs, was the very man who had betrayed George Lawrence into the hands of the Sikhs under circumstances which even an Afghan would be likely to condemn.

'Mohammed Khan,' said the Chief Commissioner, 'had been degraded by the Sikhs themselves, and, at the time of our conquest of the Punjab, he was living more as a prisoner than a free man at Lahore. My brother, Sir Henry Lawrence, had treated him with the greatest honour and consideration, and had allowed him to return to his fiefs in Peshawur and Kohat. There he plotted against my elder brother, Colonel George Lawrence; and when that officer and his family, at the urgent entreaty of Mohammed Khan himself, sought an asylum at Kohat, he basely gave them up to the insurgents.'

At this point, Hyder Khan seized the Chief Commissioner's two hands, and exclaimed, 'For God's sake say no more! spare me the repetition of my relative's treachery, which blackened the name of our whole race. Who does not know that the Khazwanis are called Khugwanis to this day because they gave protection to a *khuk* (wild pig) which their own sovereign hunted into their tents?' Another of the Sirdars cried out, 'There is not an Afghan who does not feel the disgrace which Sultan Mohammed Khan has cast on his nation. Hospitality is an Afghan virtue.'

Hyder Khan then gave up the point, remarking that he could say nothing in favour of his uncle, and had only broached the question at all under the pressure of Mohammed Khan's entreaties to the Ameer. The whole party seemed much relieved when the discussion passed on to the next clause.

Once more, Hyder Khan tried to get a promise of assistance, both in men and money, in case the Afghans should be attacked or threatened by Russia. But the Chief Commissioner stood firm, pointing out the likelihood of collision between English and Afghans, if the former ever entered the country. And the meeting broke up with the understanding that the Chief Commissioner should, when they

next met, produce the draft of a treaty in accordance with the course of the discussions. The draft, when produced, contained three short articles, by one of which the Ameer was to bind himself to be 'the friend of the friends and the enemy of the enemies of the East India Company,' while the English were not to pledge themselves to anything of the kind. Hyder Khan raised the obvious objection that the treaty was one-sided, and that the engagement ought to be reciprocal. But the Chief Commissioner replied that there was a vast difference between the two Governments ; that we were content with our condition and had no desire to advance, while the Ameer admitted that he had ambitious views ; that we had no enemies of whom we were in dread, while the Ameer was likely to be in continual collision with his ; and that if we bound ourselves as he did, it would necessitate a constant interference in Afghan affairs, which would be as distasteful to the Afghans as to us. Seeing that the Chief Commissioner meant what he said, Hyder Khan intimated that he would comply with our wishes, though he did so with evident reluctance. He then retired with his counsellors—like a jury about to consider their verdict—into an adjoining room, and returned within an hour, with one or two slight but characteristic amendments to the draft treaty. The Ameer was to be styled, not the Ameer of Kabul, but the Wali of Kabul and those countries of Afghanistan which were in his possession ; 'for Kabul,' remarked the Sirdar, 'was only a city, while Afghanistan was a large country, and Wali was the proper name for a supreme ruler, while an Ameer might be only one out of many.' This point was of course agreed to, as was the Sirdar's request that he should be allowed to sign the treaty on his own account. The business was now over, and the Sirdar took his leave—not, however, before the arrival of the Overland Mail, which enabled the Chief Commissioner to congratulate his Highness on the victory gained by Omar Pasha over the Russians at Eupatoria, an achievement which was welcomed as a happy omen for the new treaty !

John Lawrence himself was not disposed to think more highly of the treaty now that it was concluded than he had done at first, nor did he lay much store by the part he had played in it. 'The treaty has been signed,' he wrote off

to Nicholson as soon as it was over, 'and there is no harm in it. The Barukzais promise much and we little; still, they will get more out of us than we shall out of them, in the usual course of things.' And when, a little later in the year, Lord Dalhousie wrote to say that he intended to recommend him for some special honour in recognition of his services, he wrote back to Courtenay in reference to the subject: 'Nothing can be handsomer than the terms in which the Governor-General has offered to recommend me for honours. The treaty was certainly a lucky hit, and, no doubt, will be much thought of at home; but I like to think that if I deserve anything it is for my labours as a civil administrator.' It is hardly necessary to say that, in all his communications with the Governor-General, John Lawrence dwelt with special emphasis on Edwardes' services in connection with the treaty. 'Edwardes has given me the most cordial and able assistance throughout the negotiations; indeed, without his aid I should have had a difficult part to perform.'

The Chief Commissioner was now free to return to the ordinary work of his administration; and—what must have been specially pleasant amidst the many difficulties and vexations of his work—several of the old Punjabi school, who had been originally introduced into the country by his brother Henry, and were his devoted followers, on returning to India from furlough, showed no backwardness to enrol themselves under his successor. Such was Edward Lake, who returned to the Trans-Sutlej territory, where John Lawrence had first known him; such was Reynell Taylor, the hero of Lukki, who, as Deputy-Commissioner of Kangra, was to do good service during the Mutiny, and was, afterwards, to return to the Marches, which he had, in a manner, already made his own, and of which he has proved a worthy warden almost ever since; such was Harry Lumsden, 'Barbarossa,' as John Lawrence calls him, who returned, in the following year, to the command of the splendid regiment of Guides which he had himself originally raised; such, too, was Neville Chamberlain, the chivalrous and high-souled soldier who had succeeded Hodson, as Brigadier of the frontier force. Again and again, John Lawrence's delight and exultation at this last auspicious



change breaks out, even in the midst of the driest details of his business letters, in words which have been more than justified by the long and brilliant career in India which has only just terminated. 'There is no man,' says John Lawrence to Neville Chamberlain himself, 'in the Bengal army whom I would so gladly see at the head of the Punjab force as yourself, and few for whom I have a greater regard and respect.' 'I know hardly any man,' he says to another friend, 'perhaps no one man, who commands so generally the esteem of his brother soldiers.'

Not less remarkable than the way in which John Lawrence dealt with his subordinates was the way in which, without sacrificing an *iota* of principle, or ever using his words to conceal his thoughts, he managed to work harmoniously throughout with the eminent man who was at the head of the Government. How was it that he was able to do so? The question does not admit of an altogether easy answer, nor of an answer at all without a closer consideration than I have hitherto been led to give to the character of one of the most commanding Governors-General who have ruled India.

In spite of the great gifts which it is to be hoped that this biography has brought into sufficient prominence, or rather, perhaps, because of them, Lord Dalhousie had certain faults, which may have been equally observable. He was proud, ambitious, and imperious. He would crush anyone who disobeyed or thwarted him, anyone who seemed disposed to encroach upon his authority. In such cases, he had no bowels of compassion. 'He put his foot down,' was one favourite expression used by John Lawrence about his chief, when he had been aroused by any untimely show of independence. 'He met my request by an imperial "No,"' was another. 'The Lord Sahib is a pepper-pot,' said John Peter Grant, one of the ablest of his subordinates. The higher the position or the dignity of the man or body of men who kicked against the pricks, the more vigorously were the pricks applied. It was said of him that while he spared humble Deputy Collectors, and let them off easily, he had no mercy on Boards and Commissioners and Chiefs. How he had dealt with Lord Gough, with Henry Lawrence, and with Henry Lawrence's self-reliant assistants in the

Punjab, during his early days as Governor-General, I have shown in previous chapters. His letters of rebuke, in such cases, were as clear and polished as steel. If, therefore, there was very much in him to admire, there was, in my opinion, not so much to love. In particular, he was deficient in one quality, without which no man, however able, can stand quite in the front rank of the rulers of men. He was deficient in the sympathy of the imagination. I do not here refer to that moral sensibility which is more or less common to humanity at large, which disposes men to rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep, and which, if a man be of any finer mould, makes him feel the pain that he is driven to inflict on a high-minded subordinate, at least as acutely as if it were inflicted by others on himself. For, in this, Lord Dalhousie was, by no means, deficient. A soldier's son—for his father had been Commander-in-Chief in India—he burst into tears when he heard that the 14th Dragoons had run away at Chillianwallah. He wept as he read to Sir Frederick Halliday the accounts he had received of the murder of Agnew and Anderson at Mooltan, and he burst into a perfect flood of tears, again, when he saw the same trusted subordinate for the first time after the death of the wife whom he had loved most tenderly, and who had died of the effects of sea-sickness just as she came in sight of the English shore. When the news of Lady Dalhousie's death first reached him, he shut himself up for weeks in Government House, refusing to see anyone whom it was not absolutely necessary that he should see, but conscientiously and pathetically transacting all the business of the Government on paper, as well as he had ever done. His letters to Henry Lawrence during his anxiety about his brother and sister, who were prisoners in the hands of the Sikhs, are full of earnest and respectful sympathy; while his letters to John Lawrence show from first to last, and in an ever-increasing degree, the most tender and affectionate interest in his welfare. Nor were there any members of his personal staff who could not mention incidents showing his kind and thoughtful consideration for them. They were, many of them, devoted to him; and the few words that he managed to speak, or the few lines that he managed to write, in the midst of his

press of work, showing his appreciation of their services, to officers at a distance who would not have naturally expected any such special recognition from the 'Lord Sahib,' were always treasured up, in their memories or their desks, as a lifelong possession. Nothing, therefore, that I am about to say implies that he was wanting in genuine kindness of heart, or in what is ordinarily called sympathy.

It was rather in that much wider and rarer kind of sympathy which is as much intellectual as moral, and depends mainly on the vividness of the imagination, that such defects as Lord Dalhousie had, appear to me to have lain. Lord Dalhousie seems, from his letters, many scores of which lie before me, to have been unable to clothe himself sufficiently with the feelings, the prejudices, the aspirations, the ideas of those over whom he ruled; and he was unable therefore to understand how the natives of India, recognising, as many of them did, the general benevolence of our intentions and the undoubted beneficence of our rule, were yet disposed to look back, with yearning and with regret, on the days when, if they were oppressed, plundered, murdered, they were so by men of their own race, their own language, or their own creed. He was unable, again as it appears to me, to picture to himself the *cumulative* effect upon the native mind of the policy of annexation which he had openly avowed, and of the numerous additions to the empire, justifiable or otherwise, which, in accordance with it, circumstances had forced on him, or he on circumstances. In particular, I doubt whether he thought that the shock given to the religious feelings and the immemorial customs of the people by the blows which he struck at the sacred right of adoption, were deserving of any serious regard on the part of an enlightened English ruler. Nor is there in the whole of his letters, brilliant and incisive and racy as they all are, a single sentence which inclines the reader to pause and say, as he does, again and again, when he is reading the much less brilliant and incisive letters of Metcalfe or Outram, of Henry or John Lawrence, 'Here is a man whose chief claim to rule India was that he so thoroughly understood her people.' If, therefore, there have been no abler, or more commanding, or more conscientious, or more successful Governors-General of India than Lord Dalhousie,

there have been, in my opinion, Governors-General who were more sympathetic with the natives, and more beloved.

He was, however, in every way a man of commanding powers. His faults, such as they were, were those not of a small, but of a truly great man. Small, almost to insignificance, in stature, he had a mighty spirit. Weak in health, he did more than the work of the very strongest man. Afflicted with a constitutional disease, which made it a torture to him even to put on his clothes, which often confined him to his room, and disabled him from walking across it even when it was 'as level as a billiard-table,' he yet traversed India from end to end, saw everything with his own eyes, and discharged every duty of his high office, that office which 'ennobles and kills' its holders, during the almost unprecedented term of eight years with a thoroughness, a promptitude, a precision, and a dignity in which he has had few equals. His work connected with the Punjab alone might have been thought enough to occupy the energies of any ordinarily able man. Again and again, as we read his correspondence with the Lawrence brothers, and note the view, alike comprehensive and minute, which he was able to take of every incident and character on the Punjab stage, filled as it was by able men, each of whom, in his time, played many parts, we can hardly bring ourselves to believe that the new province was but a fraction of his whole field of duty, and that he was directly responsible, during a part of his eight years, for some five or six other provinces which he had annexed, as well as for the ponderous charge which had been originally committed to him, and which, as he says himself, had overtaxed and overburdened the greatest of his predecessors. In short, if he was not a Heaven-sent, he was, at least, a born ruler of men. If he was ambitious, his ambition was that of Cæsar. There was little that was personal and nothing that was ignoble about it. He was every inch a king. He felt that he could rule, and that, with a view to the happiness of the millions entrusted to him, it was right that he should do so.

John Lawrence was a man, in his way, of quite as commanding powers, and of quite as masterful a will, as Lord Dalhousie. He was therefore the last man whom we should have expected, beforehand, to get on well with him as a

subordinate. But we are now, perhaps, more in a position to see how it was that he did so.

The Punjab, John Lawrence's charge, was Lord Dalhousie's pet province. It was his own child, his own creation. John Lawrence might be its Chief Commissioner, but woe be to him if he ever forgot that he was not its supreme ruler ! If he ever did forget this, and if, acting on his own responsibility, he invited a friend to serve within its sacred precincts, or became involved in a frontier disturbance beyond them, without first applying to the Governor-General, he too was called to account, and felt what might be the weight of Lord Dalhousie's heel. But here his tact and his loyalty to superior authority came in. His notions of duty to Government he carried to a degree which one might have expected to find in a disciple of Hobbes, but hardly in a man of such popular sympathies and of such commanding powers as his. It was these notions of public duty which helped him to put up with occasional rebukes from his chief, which, if they had come from any other quarter, would have made him turn and rend his assailant. But Lord Dalhousie was much too great a man not to wish his subordinates to speak their minds frankly to him. This John Lawrence always did. There was not a step which Lord Dalhousie took in the Punjab, not an appointment he made, not an expression he dropped, which John Lawrence, if he was unable to approve of it, did not, with all his 'heroic simplicity,' fasten upon and controvert. This done, if he could not succeed in modifying his chief's views, he thought himself not only at liberty, but bound in honour to carry them out. And it was this mixture of resistance and of submission, of loyalty and of tact, and yet of plainness or even abruptness of speech, which, combined with his other and infinitely greater qualities, exactly suited Lord Dalhousie, and enabled two such master spirits, if I have read their characters and correspondence aright, to move, in the same sphere, with mutual appreciation, and without coming into anything like dangerous collision.

But Lord Dalhousie's long term of office, with its brilliant achievements in peace and war, its unexampled 'progress, moral and material,' its railways and its electric telegraphs, its conquest and its annexations, was now drawing to its

close ; and that it was so, the ablest of his lieutenants must have been, half pleasantly, half painfully, reminded by the letter which, in view of their approaching separation, was written to him by his chief :—

Ootacamund: May 1, 1855.

My dear John,—Your treaty arrived yesterday, and I lose no time in expressing to you the great gratification with which I have looked upon it in its complete form, and in acknowledging the obligations under which you have laid me by the successful conclusion of a treaty which I conceive will be regarded as of much importance both in India and in England, and which, consequently, will be viewed as honourable to my administration. I have recorded my opinions and feelings in language strong and sincere, and I hope that you and your coadjutor will feel that the Government has really appreciated your exertions, and has wished to do full justice to your services.

The additional claim which you have thus established to the approbation of the Crown and my personal gratitude renders this a fitting moment for asking you a question which my approaching relinquishment of the office of Governor-General would not have allowed me to delay much longer.

Your services in India have been so pre-eminent, that you cannot fail to be conscious of the fact, or entertain a doubt of my feeling it to be as much a personal duty as a personal pleasure to obtain for you some fitting recognition of your merits by the grant of honours from the Crown.

The question which I have to ask you is as to the form in which such honours would be most acceptable to you—whether you would prefer the grant of a baronetcy or the star of a Knight Commander of the Bath. The former is, so far, a higher honour than that it is hereditary, but many persons would question the advantage of that quality in it, unless ample fortune could be handed down with the honour.

Whichever you shall prefer, it shall be my most earnest duty and endeavour to obtain for you before I leave India. You know, of course, that I cannot *guarantee* your getting either. But I can assure you of my resolution to move heaven and earth to accomplish your wishes for you, and I think they can hardly refuse it to your claims and my solicitations.

Always, my dear John, very sincerely yours,

DALHOUSIE.

A letter which John Lawrence wrote on this subject to his intimate friend, Herbert Edwardes, before giving the answer to Lord Dalhousie which he had already pretty well made up his mind to give, is of biographical interest.

Murri: May 24, 1855.

My dear Edwardes,—I enclose a letter which I received from the Governor-General this morning. I hope he will not forget 'my coad-

jutor' when asking for honours for me. I may say with perfect truth that I consider you deserve at least as much, if not more, for the late treaty than I do.

My main object, however, in writing to you is to ask your advice as to the answer I should give. My chief pleasure in obtaining any honours is the pleasure I shall give to my sweet wife; though I would not have liked to have gone home and retired from public life without some acknowledgment of my services. The point is, whether to select the baronetcy or the K.C.B. My wife is inclined to the former as the greater honour, though she will no doubt be satisfied with my choice. I am inclined to prefer the 'star,' for the reasons to which the Governor-General points. I have no fortune to give my son; and anything which I may leave, I should feel it a sacred duty to divide among all my children. Now a poor, I may say a moneyless baronet, would be a sad figure. The honour might be some incentive to exertion, though not a good one. I rather fear it might prove an inducement to look to others rather than oneself for success. Kindly give me your advice on this point by return of post. I cannot conclude this note without saying that in fighting to get you made Commissioner of Peshawur, it turns out that, like the bandy-legged smith in the 'Maid of Perth,' I was fighting for my own hand.

His letter to Lord Dalhousie was to a similar effect, and once more the Governor-General replied.

June 26, 1855.

My dear Lawrence,—I received yesterday your letter of the 1st inst. I repeat my assurance that I will do my best to obtain for you the K.C.B. before I leave India. I cannot think it possible that I can fail in such an attempt; for no man has won it more fairly or deserved it better than yourself.

I think you have done quite wisely in preferring it to the baronetcy. My letters from England give me no clue to the name of my successor. Indeed, they do not know it themselves; and the present Government are afraid to select, in their present infirm condition.

My wooden leg is rather better of late. How is yours coming on?

Ever yours sincerely,  
DALHOUSIE.

The name of Lord Dalhousie's successor was known in India very shortly after this letter was written, and it is the name of a man never to be mentioned by Englishmen except with feelings of gratitude and veneration. But his gifts were of a widely different kind from Lord Dalhousie's, and no one, probably, could estimate more accurately the immense loss that Lord Dalhousie, whatever the excellence of his successor, would be to India, than his chief lieutenant.

The following letter brings out his feelings on the subject clearly enough :—

Murri: August 28, 1855.

My dear Lord,—I am glad to hear your Lordship thinks we shall like Lord Canning, and I hope he will be satisfied with us. Still I must say that your Lordship's loss will be sincerely felt. A stimulus has been given to the general administration of India, and a general vigour infused into all departments, which, if only carried on, must wipe out the reproach under which the Government formerly laboured.

To myself, personally, the change will be great. I can hardly expect to have so kind, so considerate, and so friendly a master. As one grows in years, one feels almost a disinclination to form new relations, even on the public account. Much of the work in the Punjab is both delicate and difficult. The Administration requires both vigour and judgment. The chief officer has to control a large body of his countrymen, drawn from different professions and educated in various schools. He possesses little prestige, and no power but what he derives from his own character. Do what he will, he must, to a great extent, depend on the view which may be taken of his conduct by those at a distance.

To your Lordship the return to your own country will probably be a subject of unmixed pleasure, but to the friends you leave behind, among whom I am one of the sincerest, it cannot fail to be a cause of real regret.

In the intermediate autumn John Lawrence had hope to pay his long-intended and often postponed visit to Cashmere: but it was, once more, put off by the serious illness of his wife, and by the strong probability that she would be obliged to return to England. 'My wife is very unwell, and the doctors say *must go home this year*. This has bothered me a good deal, and I don't like leaving her even for a time, as we must be separated so soon. . . . I should not mind going too, but, with seven children, cannot afford to do so. Sometimes, I think of taking her to Cashmere, at other times, of giving up this trip and staying here (Murri) until it be cool enough to take her down.' Happily his wife rallied, and the thought of separation was given up for the time. In November, he and she went into camp, as usual, for the winter months; but the rough life, the heat of the tents by day, and the cold by night were too much for her. She was taken so ill on the way down to Lahore that they were obliged to stop at a small police station on the wayside—the only cover that could be got—for some twenty days, ten of them at Gukkur, and ten near Gujranwalla. Again the doctors urged that



she should return to England, and, during her illness, her passage was taken, and all arrangements made for her departure. But, on her partial recovery, she again rebelled, and declaring that if she was not equal to Indian life with her husband, much less would she be equal to English life without him, she, once again, won the day. It was a happy thing for her and for her husband that she did so. Had she not stood firm, the most faithful of wives would have been absent from her husband during the greatest crisis of his life, the Indian Mutiny. She would have heard much of what he did, for all England and all India were ringing with his praises. But she would have heard and not seen. Instead of an interval of only thirty miles, which, in case of necessity, he or she could have traversed in a night, seven thousand miles of ocean would have rolled between them; and now that his deedful life is over, almost the only blank in the united happiness of the most happy of married lives would have been the very two years in which each would have given most to have been within hail of the other, to have been able to share in company the extremity of the peril and so to have doubled the joys of the great deliverance.

John Lawrence stayed at Lahore for a month or so, and on February 1st, 1856, as soon, that is, as his wife was able to move, they set out for Calcutta to pay their final visit to Lord Dalhousie. They left their two little children at Lahore under the care of Mrs. Macpherson, the wife of John Lawrence's indefatigable Military Secretary, and started for a complete holiday. It was the first holiday which John Lawrence had allowed himself to take since the end of his furlough some fourteen years before, and even this he appears to have begrudged himself! 'I am very sorry to go,' he says to Edwardes in a letter which hints also at other troubles that were cropping up around him.

I do not anticipate much pleasure or comfort from the trip, and I shall be up to my neck in arrears of work on my return. No decisive reply has come regarding the honours, and I may have to come back like a *sharmindah billi* (a shamefaced cat). . . . As to Nicholson, I will never help him to leave the Punjab, though I will never oppose his going. I feel very sore about him. You might as well run rusty as he should. By the bye, he shot a man the other day who went at him with a drawn sword. . . . Yes, Oude is a good job, and though I know

that Outram is a good man, I do not see how he can work it properly. I hear — is to be one of his Commissioners. He is an able fellow, but not fit for such a post, I should say. However, why should I fash myself with such matters? I only hope they will not want some of my good men. I would, however, make them a present of a number of fellows, with a right good will.

It may be well to mention here that it was during the illness of Lord Dalhousie at Ootacamund, during the preceding year, that the Oude question had reached its crisis, and that Lord Dalhousie had there composed his masterly Minute summing up for the 'convenience of those to whom it would belong to decide the future of Oude,' the evidence which had been collected as to the inveterate abuses of its government, and recommending something like its annexation. It is a document which, in spite of his intense physical suffering, shows no symptom of mental disturbance or weakness. It is one, moreover, which must carry conviction to almost every impartial mind. For it was based on the evidence and on the recommendations of such staunch defenders of native dynasties, and men so intimately acquainted with the facts of the case, as Colonel Sleeman, General Low, and Sir James Outram, and was endorsed by the deliberate judgment of the Court of Directors, of the Board of Control, and of the Cabinet at home, of which Mr. Gladstone was a member.

The details of the measure and its justification lie beyond the scope of this biography. But it should be mentioned that John Lawrence quite approved of the even more stringent course taken by the authorities in England, the annexation of the territory and the abolition of the throne. Like the annexation of the Punjab, and unlike, I think, some other annexations of Lord Dalhousie, it was justified not only by treaty stipulations, but by the consciousness of the duty we owed to the people of the province, the duty of saving them from a despotism which was as feeble as it was cruel and wasteful, and which our support alone had saved from the two correctives which, after the manner of Orientals, might otherwise have been applied to it, insurrection or assassination. 'I suppose,' John Lawrence writes to his friend Courtenay on January 9, 'that the orders regarding Lucknow have come, and I hope for annexation. Anything short of it is a mistake. Will not all the people rejoice

except the fiddlers, barbers, and that genus? I wish I was thirty-five instead of forty-five, and had to put it in order! In two years the administration ought to equal that of the Punjab. It will be much more easily managed, having no dangerous frontier.'

John Lawrence arrived at Calcutta on February 17, 1856, and his first wish when there seems to have been to get away again! The idea of the work which he had left behind him, and which must fall, during his absence, on Montgomery, who was already overburdened, while Macleod, the Financial Commissioner, was in his usual arrears, seems to have haunted him. Lord Dalhousie being still at Barrackpore, he took up his quarters at Mountain's Hotel. It was the height of the Calcutta season, and the smart dresses, the constant parties, the state dinners and ceremonials at Government House connected with the departure of the old and the arrival of the new Governor-General, formed a sufficiently startling contrast to the simple life, the domestic pleasures, and the ceaseless round of duties from which the Chief Commissioner of the Punjab and his wife had seldom cared to emerge.

Lord Dalhousie welcomed his Chief Lieutenant on arrival in a touching note from Barrackpore. It was the last that he was to write to him in India, and nearly the last that he was ever to write to him.

My dear old Boy,—I have just received your letter, and as I shall be in Calcutta to-morrow evening for good, I will not give you the trouble of coming out here, but will see you, and with *sincere pleasure*, on Tuesday forenoon. As for my health, Jan La'rin, I am a cripple in every sense.

Sunday evening.

Ever yours most sincerely,

DALHOUSIE.

Much to Lord Dalhousie's disappointment, the Gazette did not arrive from England in time to give to him the peculiar pleasure of conferring, and to John Lawrence the peculiar pleasure of receiving at his hands, the Knight-Commandership of the Bath. But any vexation which John Lawrence may have felt in consequence must, in part at least, have been removed by two unexpected occurrences. It was during this farewell visit that Lord Dalhousie drew up a Minute recommending that the Punjab should be raised to the

dignity of a Lieutenant-Governorship, and that, as a matter of course, its Chief Commissioner should become its first Lieutenant-Governor; and secondly, John Lawrence met here—for the first and last time since the tragical parting at Lahore—his brother Henry, and during three days was able to have pleasant intercourse with him. 'I saw Henry,' he writes to Edwardes, 'in Calcutta for three days. I never saw him looking better. His beard is longer and greyer than formerly, but he himself looked strong and hearty. He was full of going home, and seemed half inclined to go then, but a case in Jypore detained him. I think he will certainly go next year.'

Lord Canning landed in Calcutta on the last day of February 1856, and was received by Lord Dalhousie on the steps which have witnessed the making and unmaking of so many kings; and, by one of the most rapid but most striking and picturesque of ceremonials, he had 'within five minutes of his arrival,' as he wrote to a friend at home, become Governor-General of India. For a week, the outgoing and incoming rulers remained together in Government House, engaged in conference, so earnest and so prolonged that, as Lord Canning again wrote home, he had been 'unable to take more than one look out of doors during the whole time.' How much there was for the one man to impart and for the other to receive and to assimilate, anyone who has skimmed the pages of this biography may form some slight conception; no one, perhaps, but those very few men who have filled the office of Governor-General themselves, have not sunk under its weight, and have lived to look back upon it, can have any adequate idea.

In the intervals of their conferences, John Lawrence saw, as it had been Lord Dalhousie's wish that he should do, much of his new chief, and made upon him an impression the strength of which is to be measured, not so much by the time they spent together, as by the severity of the test to which it was to be exposed, when the storm burst over the country, and made John Lawrence, for the time, almost as truly Governor-General of the north and north-west of India as Lord Canning was of the east and south.

On March 6, Lord Dalhousie set sail from Calcutta. His embarkation was witnessed by a vast concourse of Europeans

and of natives, not one of whom could fail to respect and admire the ruler who had done so much to enlarge the empire, to develop its resources, to elevate the condition of its masses ; who had worked so fearlessly and thoroughly in accordance with the faith that was in him, and now, worn out by his labours, was going home to die. Among those who 'accompanied him to the ship' was, of course, the man whom he most respected, and most regretted of all whom he was leaving behind him. He was still simple 'John Lawrence,' for the Gazette, though it was on its way to India, did not meet Lord Dalhousie's eye till he touched at Ceylon. It contained the names of Sir William Sleeman and of Sir James Outram as well as of Sir John Lawrence ; and hardly had the Chief Commissioner reached Lahore, when, with the news of the honour which had, at last, been bestowed upon him, he received also the warm congratulations of Lord Dalhousie written from his ship at sea.

H.C.S. Feroze. At sea : March 20, 1856.

My dear Lawrence,—The home news at Ceylon showed me your name in the Gazette as K.C.B. at last. You would take for granted my joy in this recognition of your merits and services. But I must give you joy nevertheless in words, and I do it from my heart. No man ever won the honour better, and of all your relatives and friends, not one has greater gratification in seeing honour done to you than I have. Pray offer my warmest congratulations and my kindest wishes to Lady Lawrence.

I was very miserable in parting from you all upon the ghaut that day. Of all I leave behind me, no man's friendship is more valued by me, no man's services are so highly estimated by me, as yours. God bless you, my dear John ; write to me as you promised, and believe me now and always,

Your sincere friend,  
DALHOUSIE.

To Sir J. Lawrence, K.C.B.

Thus one great epoch in John Lawrence's life had come and gone. He had reached the point which, as in the case of his brother Henry, has been so fatal to the peace of mind, if not to the whole career of some of our best Indian administrators, when he had to accommodate himself, in the full maturity of his powers and his experience, as best he might, or as far as might be needful, to a change of master. A trial, under the best of circumstances, such a change must always

be. For unrestrained intercourse, full sympathy, and intimate friendship must be succeeded, for the time at least, by an atmosphere of strangeness, of reserve, and of constraint. How he was able to meet this trial, and other infinitely greater ones, we shall see hereafter. But, at this critical point in his career, ere yet the first rumblings of the impending storm have been heard in India, and while his province is still in the midswing of its peaceful progress, this chapter may, perhaps, find its most fitting termination.

## CHAPTER XV.

JOHN LAWRENCE AND AFGHANISTAN. THE BREWING OF  
THE STORM. 1856-1857.

AN interval of little more than a year separates the departure of Lord Dalhousie from the great outbreak which is to transform the Chief Commissioner of the Punjab into its Dictator ; and I propose in this chapter, the last that I am able to devote to his peaceful rule, to describe, as fully as its importance requires, or as space permits, the interview between Sir John Lawrence and Dost Mohammed at Peshawur, which helped so much to determine the attitude of the Afghans towards us throughout the Mutiny, and the attitude of Sir John Lawrence to Afghanistan throughout the whole of his subsequent career. I propose also to quote, incidentally, such extracts from his letters as appear to bring out any points in his administration, his character, or his opinions which may not, hitherto, have had sufficient stress laid on them, or have any bearing on the mighty conflict which, almost unnoticed, was now so near its birth.

There could hardly be a greater contrast between two high-minded and able men than that between Lord Dalhousie and his successor. But John Lawrence's personal intercourse with the new Governor-General at Calcutta, and the frank and easy tone of Lord Canning's letters, the first of which congratulated him warmly upon his honours and only regretted that Lord Dalhousie had not been able to confer them on him in person, soon put him at his ease, and reassured him as to the future. 'I like Lord Canning,' he writes to his former chief a few months after his departure, 'as your Lordship anticipated, very much. He is kind,

courteous, and considerate, as well as prompt and able. I hope he may remain in India for my time, and come up and see the Punjab.'

Lord Canning had scarcely been able to master the routine work of his high office when, much to his disgust, he found himself in the immediate prospect of a war with Persia. His farewell speech at the banquet which, according to custom, had been given him by the Directors of the East India Company before he left England, had revealed to the world the man and his policy in lines as clearly chiselled as was his own noble countenance. It was plain that he coveted no military renown, nor any addition to the vast responsibilities which, with equal modesty and courage, he declared that he would do his best to face. The quarrel with Persia, therefore, was none of his seeking. Its origin is rather to be sought far back in the blind folly which had led up to the disgraces and disasters of the first Afghan war. That fever fit had long since passed away, and there were few men indeed in England or in India who did not feel that we had been guilty of a blunder as well as of a crime, when we had endeavoured to impose a monarch of our own arbitrary choice on a free and a reluctant people. The awakening had been a rough one. But the dreams of a fevered brain have an after-effect upon the system, even when they have long since been recognised to be but dreams. What we had failed to do at Cabul, we must still attempt, after a manner, to do at Herat, a place which lay some two hundred miles further from our Indian Empire. In one respect, indeed, we had grown wiser. Our aim was not so much to put any particular man upon the throne of Herat, as to prevent certain persons from seizing it. Herat, lying as it does between Afghanistan and Persia, was, if we could have our own way, to belong to neither. It was not to belong to the Barukzyes, for we had injured Dost Mohammed too much to make us wish unnecessarily to increase his power. It was not to belong to Persia; for it was an axiom, then as now, with all who have studied the subject, that Persia was a puppet in the hands of Russia, and that if the Persians occupied Herat, it would be Russia rather than Persia that would be knocking, not at the gate of India—that feat of geographical discovery was reserved for a later age—but at the gate of Afghanistan.



It was in this belief that an attempt made by Persia on Herat in 1853 had been resolutely resisted by us, and a promise extracted from the Shah to respect its independence. But the Crimean War had followed; and the Shah, caring less for the English who had taken Sebastopol than for the Russians who had threatened Khiva and taken Kars, now again began to look wistfully towards Herat. Diplomatic relations between the two courts were broken off, and Dost Mohammed once more turned to us for aid against the common foe. The Home Government took the matter into its own hands, and, on July 11, 1856, sent an *ultimatum* to Persia intimating that an attack upon Herat would involve her in war with England.

Lord Canning and Sir John Lawrence were alike disgusted at the prospect of the 'inglorious and costly operations in Persia,' which thus opened out before them; and they were hardly better pleased with the idea of a new treaty with Afghanistan, and of the complications in which it might involve us. But if war there was to be, it was better, as they both thought, that we should have the Afghans as our allies than as our enemies; and if only the Afghans would be satisfied with a supply of money and of muskets, then the worst danger of all,—the passage of an English army through Afghanistan, and a renewed English interference with Afghan politics,—might be avoided. A naval demonstration in the Persian Gulf, and the landing of a small British force on its shores, would suffice for our part of the business, and the march of an Afghan army towards Herat would do all the rest.

So Lord Canning addressed himself to his task with a good heart, wrote to John Lawrence asking what force he would be able to supply from the Punjab Irregulars for the expedition, invited him to express his general ideas on the subject, and, finally, consulted him on the delicate question of the chief command.

The two men whom Lord Canning had specified as possessing some of the requirements for the post were Sir H. Somerset and General S. Cotton. The answer of John Lawrence is so characteristic of him, does such honour to both his head and his heart, and is such a pleasant foil to the tragical parting of the two brothers at Lahore, that I quote it in full:—

Murri: August 9, 1856.

My Lord,—I beg to acknowledge your Lordship's notes of the 28th ult. I have looked carefully through the list of officers of H.M. and the Company's services in India, and the only men whom I can think of for such a command as that of an expedition into Persia, are those shown in the annexed list. I have noted in a few words the character which each officer bears, so far as I am able to judge.

I do not know much of Sir H. Somerset, but from what I have heard of him from officers who have been at the Cape, I do not think he would answer. Brigadier Sydney Cotton is one of the best officers I have seen in India. He is a thorough soldier, loves his profession, and has considerable administrative talent. Of all the officers I have noted, with one exception S. Cotton is perhaps the best. But, on the other hand, he is not an officer in whom political authority could be invested with advantage.

The man whom I would name for the command of such an expedition is my own brother Henry. I can assure your Lordship that I am not, in the slightest degree, biased in his favour. He has seen a good deal of service, having been in the first Burmese war, in the second Afghan war, and in both the Sutlej campaigns. He is not an officer of much technical knowledge, except in his own branch (the Artillery), and he is not fond of details. But, on the other hand, he has great natural ability, immense force of character, is very popular in his service, has large political acumen, and much administrative ability. I do not think there is a military man in India who is his equal on these points. He is also in possession of his full vigour, both in mind and body; and there is not a good soldier in the Punjab, or, perhaps, in Upper India, of the Bengal Army, but would volunteer to serve under him. With him as the commander and S. Cotton as the second in command the arrangement would be complete. If anything happened to my brother, by that time Cotton would be at home in those points in which he is now defective. Cotton is master of all the technical details of every arm of the service, and devotes his entire energies and thoughts to the welfare of his soldiers. But he is not a man of the ability and breadth of view which my brother possesses. In invading such a country as Persia, it will not be mere fighting which is to be provided for, but dealing with Oriental tribes and chiefs. And the result of all this would be negotiations requiring tact and knowledge of character.

Pray, my Lord, do not think there is anything like a job in what I have now written. If I know myself, I would revolt against such conduct. My brother and I have, I believe, a real and strong affection for each other; but in public life we have often disagreed, and to some extent, for a time, were estranged from each other. In all I have now said, I have been actuated solely by a desire for the public interests, and your Lordship will have full opportunity of comparing my statements with those of officers about you.

Few men would have had the moral courage, the single-heartedness, to write this. It is the exact picture of the man.

He hated jobs with a perfect hatred. But he would have hated still more the moral cowardice which would have refrained from doing what was right, because, peradventure, it might be thought to be a job. Writing to Lord Canning on another occasion, as to the method by which the irregularities which had crept into the Public Works Department in the Punjab, might be best avoided in Oude, he describes himself thus :—

I have written to your Lordship openly and freely, as I conceive you would wish me to have done. If not too great a liberty, may I ask that such communications may be reserved for yourself alone? This being the case, I could always write with much less reserve on men and things than would otherwise be necessary. Your Lordship may, however, depend that I will write nothing but the truth. My feelings are so strongly enlisted in my public duties, that I may almost say that I have no friends independent of such considerations. My best friends are the officers of whom I think best in my public relations.

Of course, in his enfeebled condition of health, the worries of his position could not but tell more and more on him. 'I am distracted,' he writes on October 15, 1856, 'with work and long reports, and one botheration and another.' Among the worst of these 'botherations' was, once more, the wayward and restless spirit of Nicholson, who seemed quite unable, in spite of all his chief's consideration for him, to play second fiddle to him.

Not that there was not a tender side to John Nicholson. It was pleasant to see him with children at any time ; and in the hands of Henry Lawrence or Herbert Edwardes he was himself like a little child. They could do anything with him. But he could brook no official control. Obstinate, haughty, and imperious, no regulations could bind him ; they were made only to be broken. 'The autocrat of all the Russias,' he was called not inaptly by his brother officers ; and the natives, not less naturally, as I shall show hereafter, were disposed to worship him as a god. On the frontier, he was free, even under John Lawrence's rule, to act pretty much as he liked. Many of his deeds, had they been done in other parts of India, would have caused a general rising, or his dismissal from the service—not without reason. He was one day, as I have been told by Colonel Urmston, who was then Assistant Commissioner

at Peshawur, riding through a village, attended by a single orderly, and he observed in passing a mosque that the Moulla, instead of salaaming to him, looked at him with a gesture of contempt or hatred. When he got home he sent his orderly to fetch the Moulla, and then and there shaved off his beard! He was always prompt in action. One day he was standing at his garden gate in Bunnoo with a couple of Englishmen and a few native attendants, when a man with a sword walked up to him and, peering into his face, asked which of them was Nikkul Seyn. Nicholson divined his object, and snatching a musket from a sentry who was passing by, brought it to bear on the man, and told him he would shoot him dead if he did not drop his sword. The man rushed in at him, sword in hand, and Nicholson was as good as his word. The ball passed into his heart through a copy of the Koran, which was turned down—so it was said—at a page promising Paradise to those who fell in the attempt to slay unbelievers! Nicholson's official report to the Chief Commissioner was as prompt and curt as was his act. It was to the following effect:—

Sir,—I have the honour to inform you that I have just shot a man who came to kill me.

Your obedient servant,  
JOHN NICHOLSON.

At one time, in a fit of discontent, Nicholson set his heart on going to the Crimea, but his chief put the objections forcibly as well as humorously before him: 'I hope that Lord Hardinge will not employ you in the Crimea. You are much more useful with us. As for your usefulness being diminished, this is all imagination. I hope to see Ross, [the kindly but somewhat feeble Commissioner of Leia], made a Bishop or a Commander-in-Chief in the Crimea, and so his post will fall naturally to you. He cannot intend to remain here always. I look on the way things are managed in the Crimea as perfectly distressing; and setting aside my desire to retain your services, I should be sorry, on your own account, to see you in the Crimea. The report here is that Lord Hardinge will resign and the Duke of Cambridge be made Commander-in-Chief in England.'

The Crimean danger had thus passed over, but another supervened. A request from Sir John Lawrence, couched in very courteous terms, that he would go down and co-operate with Chamberlain against his old foes the Musaod Wuzeris, brought on another storm ; and Nicholson, equally angry with his chief and with Chamberlain, announced his intention of leaving the Punjab altogether. 'I can never help him to leave the Punjab,' said Lawrence sadly to Edwardes, 'but I will never prevent his doing so.' But more violent letters from Nicholson made him change his mind, and, at last, he consented to ask Lord Canning to transfer his impetuous lieutenant to Bhurtpore, where he would be under his brother Henry. Providence ruled otherwise, and, after a hot season spent by John Lawrence's leave in the cool climate of Cashmere, and a wistful glance towards Persia and the war which was going on there, Nicholson settled down by his own wish as Deputy Commissioner at Peshawur, and, happily for India as well as for the Punjab, it was at Peshawur that he was still to be found when the Mutiny broke out.

But I must return, once more, to the war with Persia, and the proposed alliance with Afghanistan.

After the treaty of 1855, Dost Mohammed had taken possession of Candahar, and Futteh Khan Khuttuck, who had been sent thither by us on a special mission connected with the ratification of the treaty, had brought back a vigorous description of the Afghan ruler, and of the difficulties by which he was surrounded. Dost Mohammed, he said, was nearly seventy years of age, had a perfectly white beard which he dyed black, looked in ill-health, seldom went out, and when he did, rode on an elephant, 'a very bad sign in an Afghan well known for his horsemanship !' Everybody was looking out for his death, especially his numerous sons, who were only waiting till his life was over, to fight it out over his dead body. There were endless feuds among them, but, out of respect to their father, they put off cutting each other's throats. Old as he was, Dost Mohammed was anxious to march in person against Herat. But he had no means. What he wanted from us was not men, of which he had plenty, but money, of which he had none at all. His army was starving, and

was therefore driven to plunder the citizens and farmers. 'Candahar,' said Futteh Khan, 'is like a field of ripe *bajra* (millet), and the citizens on the roofs of the houses, like bird-scarers in the *machans* (platforms), are crying Ha! ha! to scare away the flock of plunderers. Meanwhile, the Ameer himself is never abused by anyone. He conciliates them all with soft words, "My son," or "My brother," or "My child," which goes further than a rupee.' He had come to Candahar, he wrote to a friend, that he might visit his father's grave, which was situated on a bare hillock eight miles distant, in the hope that he might, at last, lay his own beside his father's bones. Such were the condition and such the apparent prospects of the man who was, nevertheless, said to be eager to march at the head of his army to Herat, and whom we were to subsidise with arms and money. Well might John Lawrence question whether both would not be thrown away!

But there was life in the old Dost yet. After appointing Gholam Hyder Khan—whose life, two years before, had seemed to John Lawrence not to be worth six months' purchase—Governor of the newly annexed province of Candahar, he left the city on September 14, and led his starving army back to Cabul, and from there sent to Edwardes to propose a meeting with the British authorities. Edwardes, as might have been expected from his antecedents, was in favour of the interview, John Lawrence against it.

It appears to me we shall get nothing out of the Ameer, except by paying through the nose for it; and this being the case, I would not bring on an interview. Should his Highness come down to meet us and not gain his object, he would assuredly be aggrieved. Even if we give him twenty or thirty lacs of rupees, we can feel no assurance whatever, we have no pledge that he will take an active part in the Herat affair. As folks say of the Russians, a material guarantee is necessary. . . . Just fancy Colonel Jacob writing coolly to Government to place all Afghan relations under him! So far as I personally am concerned, it would cause me no regret.

Lord Canning was in favour of the interview, but expressed his emphatic agreement with Sir John Lawrence's view that the best chance for getting on well with the Afghans was to have as few points of contact with them as possible; and

Sir John, not caring to gain credit by a thing which he did not wholly approve, generously proposed, unless the Ameer made a point of his coming, to stay away and leave the matter in Edwardes' hands. But the lieutenant was as generous as his chief. 'I left it to Edwardes,' John Lawrence writes to Lord Canning, 'to decide whether I should be present or not, and he, very magnanimously, has replied that I had better be there.' Accordingly, on November 16, he set out for Rawul Pindi, 'on a wild goose chase,' as he calls it to his friend Montgomery. His intention was to go by Koshalghurh on the Indus to Kohat, and there to wait till he heard whether the Ameer proposed to meet him in the Kurum valley, a hundred miles further on, or at Peshawur.

While he was waiting here, the long expected but still somewhat startling news came that Herat had been captured by the Persians, and, in the first flush of anxiety, Edwardes wrote a memorandum, which he begged John Lawrence to forward to Government, advocating the immediate despatch of British troops to Cabul and Candahar. In his after life, or in his soberer moments, Edwardes would have looked on such a proposal with dismay. But his letter did good work now by calling forth a protest from his chief, in which he clearly set forth that policy towards Afghanistan, to which, founded as it was on an almost unique knowledge of the facts of the case, he ever afterwards clung, through good and evil report, with characteristic tenacity.

John Lawrence, hearing, at last, that the Dost proposed to meet him at Jumrood, and not in the Kurum valley, traversed the Kohat Pass and reached Peshawur on November 29, where he was shortly afterwards joined by his wife from Rawulpindi. The Dost, like a true Oriental, was slow and stately in his movements, and another month had passed before news came that he had reached the further end of the Khyber. The Chief Commissioner of the Punjab, the Commissioner of Peshawur, General Sydney Cotton, who was in command of the Peshawur force, and Harry Lumsden, who was in command of the Guides, at once moved forward to Jumrood, accompanied by some 3,000 troops of all arms; so as to be in readiness to receive the Afghan sovereign with becoming honours, as soon as he

should set foot on British soil. But the Ameer, fearing the treachery of which, as an Afghan, he was always capable, begged that Sir John Lawrence would first meet him on Afghan territory. Sir John consented, and early on New Year's Day, 1857, two of Dost Mohammed's sons, accompanied by a band of wild-looking horsemen, appeared in the British camp, ready to escort him into the royal presence. It must have been a journey of no ordinary interest to the English visitors. For it was the first glimpse that any one of the party—though most of them had lived in sight of its entrance for so many years—had ever been able to catch of the interior of that forbidding pass, over whose gloomy portals might well have been inscribed the words of Dante,

‘All hope abandon, ye who enter here.’

It was indeed an instinct of self-preservation, no less than the stringent orders of the Government, which had prohibited Englishmen, however curious and however adventurous, from entering within the precincts of those dreaded Khyberees who, half-starved as they were, and living, many of them, like foxes in holes in the ground, had never yet been subdued by man, had levied black-mail from every conqueror who passed through their fastnesses, and sallying forth by night, had, within the last few years, murdered so many British subjects and harried so many native flocks and herds, almost under the eyes of the garrison of Peshawur. It must have been with feelings, therefore, not of curiosity or of interest alone, that the small cavalcade entered the forbidden precincts and made its way for some miles up the pass, every crag and pinnacle of which might well conceal an Afghan marksman.

John Lawrence, knowing well the risk he ran, had begged Sydney Cotton—to whose account I owe some of the details of the story—to give orders to his troops that, if any firing was heard within the pass, they should at once enter it and rush to the rescue. It was an order which, as it turned out, might have cost the lives of the whole party; for when they reached the royal camp, the heavy guns which were drawn up in front of the Ameer's tent fired a salute in their



honour, the salvo of Artillery was taken up by a musketry fire from the Afghan troops who lined the lower hills, and this again by the mountaineers who crowned the tops for miles along the pass, till the whole Khyber rang and rang again with the echoes of what might well have been mistaken for a general engagement. Had the officer left behind in command of the British troops done as he was told, and moved with all speed into the pass, there can be little doubt, argues Sydney Cotton, that the Afghans, seeing or pretending to see the treachery which they feared, would have fallen on the defenceless Feringhis and massacred them to a man. But concluding, from the regularity of the fire, that it was only a salute, he wisely stood his ground, and the danger passed by.

A grand Durbar was then held, 'a collection of cut-throats and villains,' says the Chief Commissioner, 'such as I had never found myself among before.' Conspicuous among them was Saadut Khan, chief of the Mohmunds, our own arch-enemy. But, at Sir John Lawrence's request, the Dost ordered him to withdraw from the Durbar. Two days afterwards the Dost, with a venerable white beard—for he no longer now cared to dye it black—and clad in a garment of coarse camel's hair, entered British territory, passed through a line of 7,000 British troops, a mile long, drawn up to do him honour, and pitched his camp at Jumrood. And here, on January 5, the business of the meeting began.

Behind the Ameer stood his sons, and on his left were his most trusted Sirdars, while he himself set forth at length his relations with Persia, and showed, pathetically, how his friendship for us had embroiled him with the Shah, and had now led to the fall of Herat. What was he to do? He was ready to do our bidding, whatever it might be, and, witness it Allah and his Prophet! he would henceforward be our firm friend, though all the world was on the opposite side. It was the cue of the Chief Commissioner, at this first interview, to elicit the views of the Ameer rather than to set forth his own; and Dost Mohammed, waxing more eloquent, as he warmed to the subject, declared that it was the dearest wish of his heart to recover Herat; and that if the English would help him by making a strong

diversion in the Persian Gulf, and by giving other aid, he would raise a force from all the countries south of the Oxus, with which he would beat his enemies in the field, mine the walls of Herat, blow up its towers, and take the place at the point of the sword !

At this point in the conference, a horseman galloped up to Sir John Lawrence with a telegraphic message from Lord Canning at Calcutta, which informed him that a force of 5,000 troops would be sent to the Persian Gulf, and that an article would be inserted in any treaty of peace with Persia binding her to renounce all pretensions to Afghanistan, and to withdraw her troops from Herat. The message ended with the significant words, 'You may make use of this.' And John Lawrence did make use of the first part at once, but reserved the second and more important announcement for a future day. Meanwhile, he begged the Ameer to lay before him an exact statement of the means at his disposal. This, replied the Ameer, was a very difficult matter, and would require a full day for its consideration. So the meeting broke up.

Two days afterwards, on January 7, the conference met again, and, this time, at the tent of the Chief Commissioner. The Ameer's statement showed that he had 34,000 men and 61 guns at his disposal ; a force which he thought ought to be increased, in view of the expedition to Herat, to 50,000 men and 100 guns. 'But if,' said he, 'you tell me to take more troops, I will take more ; if less, less. You, Sahibs, know Persia best.'

The Chief Commissioner proceeded to point out the magnitude of the enterprise, and the divisions of the Afghans at home which had cost them Attock, Cashmere, and Peshawur ; when Hafiz-ji, one of the Sirdars, interposed with the very pertinent question, 'Did we intend to send any British officers into Afghanistan ?' 'If we give you money and material to aid in your expedition to Herat,' replied Sir John, 'we must send officers to see that it is properly applied, but they will exercise no kind of authority or command.' The matter dropped for the time ; and, on the following day, the Ameer's sons brought in more detailed statements of their resources, which made it clear that if the expedition to Herat lasted only a year, a contribution

of 63 lacs of rupees, of 50 guns, and of 8,000 stand of arms would be required from us, besides an unlimited supply of ammunition. This was a large demand, and led John Lawrence to ask how much would be required if a strictly defensive policy were observed towards Persia.

'The question,' replied one of the Sirdars, 'between Persians and Afghans is one not merely of this world, but of the next; for Sunnis and Shiahhs can never unite: but the matter shall be considered, and if you prefer it, the Afghans, contrary to their wishes and their usual practice, will remain on the defensive. In this case, 4,000 stand of arms and ammunition, together with sufficient money to support 8,000 additional infantry, is all that we shall ask of you.' Of these terms and this policy the Chief Commissioner approved, and telegraphed his recommendation of them to the Government of India. Lord Canning telegraphed back his assent, and Sir John Lawrence then advised the Dost to give up the expedition to Herat, and offered 4,000 muskets and a subsidy of a lac of rupees a month, so long as the war should last, or as it should please the British Government to continue it.

There was only one condition of the subsidy which gave rise to serious discussion—the right to depute British officers to Cabul, who were to see that it was properly applied. The Ameer 'in a very marked and decided manner' observed that he had only consented to such a step on the understanding that an attempt would be made by our aid to recover Herat. And, on the following day, when the draft articles of the treaty were being discussed, the Sirdars, after talking the matter over with him, renewed their objections to the proposal. It was not so much, they remarked, that the Ameer personally objected to the presence of English officers at Cabul, as that the people would not like it; their national and religious feelings would be outraged; they would think, when they saw Europeans in the capital, that the old days of Shah Soojah were come back again, and the mission would thus defeat its own end. Let a native wakil be placed at Cabul, and let British officers, if the British Government insisted on it, be placed at Candahar, where they would be more useful with reference to the Persian War, and less obnoxious to the population. An

alliance between the Afghans and English must be brought about gradually. 'Do not let us go,' they said, 'too fast.'

Wise advice, wisely listened to! Otherwise the tragedy of 1878 might have been anticipated in 1857. The Lumsden brothers might have been as Cavagnari and his followers. The outbreak of the Mutiny might have found us deeply plunged in a war with Afghanistan, and the resources of the Punjab must then have been concentrated on Peshawur, rather than poured down in one continuous stream towards Delhi. Could India have weathered such a storm?

On January 26, at 4 P.M., the articles of agreement were signed and sealed in the Ameer's tent; the Chief Commissioner of the Punjab, the Commissioner of Peshawur, and Major Lumsden being present on one side; the Ameer, his son, Sirdar Azim Khan, his brother, and many Sirdars, being present on the other. 'I have now made an alliance,' exclaimed the Ameer, 'with the British Government, and, come what may, I will keep it till death.' And he was as good as his word. The Afghans returned to their homes well satisfied, but not so Sir John Lawrence. For in spite of the conclusion of the treaty, and the way in which he had managed to minimise its dangers, in spite also of the warm thanks of the Governor-General, he could not help asking himself, whether the lac of rupees to be poured monthly into the lap of the Ameer, would not have been better spent in strengthening our defences at home, or in finishing the great public works in the Punjab which were, even then, being starved for want of means.

The mission of British officers to Afghanistan, of which so much had been said in the conference, was, by desire of the Ameer, not despatched till the 13th of March following. The officers selected for the dangerous and thankless office were Harry Lumsden, whose name has been so often mentioned in this biography before, and his younger brother Peter, whom the Chief Commissioner describes as 'a very fine young fellow, universally loved, a capital rider and surveyor, good-tempered, active and intelligent.' But Peter Lumsden fell ill, and Sir John Lawrence, not thinking it right to send anyone who was in weak health so far beyond the reach of medical assistance, telegraphed to Lieutenant Henry Norman, a young officer of equally high promise,

who was then serving as Assistant Adjutant-General at Meerut, to come up and take his place. But the proposal to send a doctor with the expedition, whose medicine chest would, probably, do more than anything else to make the mission popular at Candahar, met the difficulty ; and Norman remained behind, to do, as it turned out, even more perilous and much more important work at Delhi, than would have fallen to him at Candahar. Dr. Bellew, who is now well known by his writings on Afghanistan and Persia, was the medical officer selected to accompany the mission. Its primary object was to see that the subsidy given by England was not misapplied or wasted by the Ameer. But its members were also bidden, in their instructions, to bear in mind that they would 'do good service to the British power in India, if they could impress upon all with whom they came into contact, that we had no desire to send a single man, armed or unarmed, across the border, except with the good-will of the Afghan nation ; that our presence was temporary and for one single purpose, which would cease with the war ; that what we desired was that the Afghans should always retain their freedom and independence, and defend themselves effectually against aggression from whatever side ; that it was for this one object that our aid was given, and that all we asked in return from them was confidence in the purity of our intentions.'

It will be remembered that when the war with Persia had first been in prospect, Sir John Lawrence, considering it of paramount importance that the man selected for the chief command should have political as well as military ability, had strongly recommended his brother Henry for the post. Failing him, he had, in a second letter, recommended Sir James Outram ; and failing him, again, Colonel Jacob, whose mixed political and military experience in Scinde would, he thought, in spite of his defects, 'an acrimonious temper and an overweening vanity,' well fit him for it. It turned out that the appointment lay not with Lord Canning, but with the Home Government ; and while Lord Canning and Sir John Lawrence were discussing the question, their choice had already fallen on the man whom Sir John had put second on his list. Outram had gone home in May, to all appearance quite broken down in health by

his long and brilliant labours. But, like the old war-horse which scents the battle from afar, he seemed to recover all his energies at the sound of arms ; and, by the beginning of the new year (1857), he was busily engaged in despatching from Bombay the second division of his force for the Persian War.

But it was not long before Henry Lawrence was offered by Lord Canning a post for which he was, perhaps, even better fitted than the command in Persia. He had, for four years past, been struggling to infuse some of his vital force into the effete princes of Rajpootana, and sighing over their impracticability and their passive resistance. And the news that he had been offered and had accepted the Chief Commissionership of the newly annexed province of Oude reached John Lawrence as he was returning to Lahore from Peshawur, in the beginning of February. It seemed to be a post exactly suited to him, and one, perchance, in which he might be able to carry out, without let or hindrance, those generous schemes for easing the transition from native to British rule, in which he had been, as he imagined, so much thwarted in the Punjab. At all events, there would be no Board here, and no brotherly heart-burnings in his way. He had, as he said himself, 'some five or six different diseases about him,' but he, at once, gave up his intention of returning to England. Health and vigour seemed to come back at a bound, as they had done to Sir James Outram ; and having first stipulated with Lord Canning that his elder brother George should succeed him in the post he was vacating, he set out for Rajpootana at once.

The months of February and March 1857 were spent by John Lawrence in administrative labours in the north and north-west of his province, at Rawul Pindi, Shahpore, Jung, and Futtehpore Gogaira, and he reached Lahore on March 27. Unfortunately there is a gap in his correspondence for six weeks from this time, which I have been unable, by appeals to the recollections of his friends, satisfactorily to fill up. His health was bad. He suffered terribly from neuralgia, and, on one occasion, he so far gave in to the pressure put upon him by the doctors as to talk of returning to England for a time, and to write to Montgomery, whom

he wished to make his *locum tenens*, on the duties of his office.

We know now, well enough, from other sources, what had been going on in the bazaars and the cantonments, among Muslims and Hindus alike, during this critical period. We know that 'the little cloud, no bigger than a man's hand,' of which Lord Canning had spoken on his departure from England, had already risen above the horizon, and, unnoticed or only half noticed by anyone in authority, was beginning to overspread the firmament. How little John Lawrence himself can have anticipated the storm which was about to burst over India, we may gather from the fact that he was now, once more, contemplating a visit to Cashmere, that he communicated his wishes to Lord Canning, and that it was only the reply of the Governor-General, that, possibly, his services might be urgently required nearer home, which led him once more to forego his purpose.

True enough it was that there had been symptoms of something brewing, as the saying is, 'in the air,' which had appeared with the beginning of the new year in the neighbourhood of Calcutta, and had, by this time, been observed at Umballa, a thousand miles away on the edge of the Himalayas and within the limits of John Lawrence's own province. There had been those mysterious 'chupatties,' pancakes of flour and water, which meant no one quite knew what, and had passed on, no one quite knew how, from village to village, and from district to district throughout the North-West Provinces. There were placards proclaiming the *Jehad* or Holy War in the name of God and of the Prophet, which had been nailed to the Jumma Musjid in Delhi, under the very noses of the British authorities. There had been weird prophecies which, passing from mouth to mouth, and losing nothing in the process, told of coming disaster to the Feringhis. There had been incendiary fires, blazing forth with ominous frequency in the cantonments, which were only outward and visible signs of other and fiercer fires which were smouldering and struggling within the Sepoys' hearts. Finally, there was the substitution of the Enfield rifle for the Brown Bess, and of the lubricated for the ordinary cartridge, which, whether by our fate or by our fault, had brought to a head all those vague

and unreasoning fears which the extinction of native dynasties and the annexation of native states, the ousting of talukdars and the resumption of jagheers, the introduction of 'fire-carriages' and of 'lightning posts,'—in short, every step in the 'moral and material progress' of India, had, each and all, some more, some less, some here, some there, contributed to awaken in the breasts of our pampered and ignorant and suspicious Sepoys.

The cartridges served out to them, lubricated, as they thought, with the fat of the cow, the sacred animal of the Hindus, and of the pig, the unclean animal of the Moham-medans, were, at once, a cause and a symptom of the fast-spreading panic; for they furnished one more, and, as it seemed, a crowning proof of the blow which Government was insidiously preparing to strike at the most sacred feelings and institutions of both sections of the community. Panic is always blind. It grows by what it feeds on, by the operation of the medicines which are administered to check its growth, no less than by its natural food. Proclamations and apologies and concessions, if they tended, momentarily, to allay the symptoms of the rising terror, only served, ultimately, to increase its strength. To demonstrate, as one kind-hearted General after another attempted to do to his bewildered troops, the absurdity of their fears, was only to give one proof the more of their reality; and so from Dumdum and Barrackpore, in the neighbourhood of the capital of India, the smouldering mischief spread to Agra, the capital of the North-Western Provinces; to Meerut, the largest military station in Hindustan, and the strongest in European troops of all arms; to Delhi, the capital of the Mogul, where his effete representative was dozing away the last hours of his reign and of his life; and so on, to Umballa, one of the chief depôts for 'instruction in musketry'—in the fatal art, that is, which, if it helped the Sepoys to kill their enemies, must needs first, they thought, ruin those who practised it, both in body and soul.

What bootied it that warnings, punishments, modifications, explanations, and denials followed one after another in rapid and bewildering succession? What bootied it that the 19th Native Infantry regiment, which had mutinied at Berhampore in February, was disbanded; that the



fanatic 'Pandy' of the 34th Native Infantry, who had made a murderous assault on an English officer at Barrackpore, was hanged; and that the seven companies who had been silent and passive, if not sympathising spectators of his deed, were disbanded also? What bootied it that the obnoxious grease had been analysed and found to be harmless; that it was, henceforward, to be mixed by the Sepoys themselves from ingredients which they themselves should be at liberty to choose; that they were bidden to tear off, and no longer to bite off, the end of the cartridge—to touch, that is, and no longer to taste the unclean thing? 'Touch not, taste not, handle not,' was still the cry of the poor panic-stricken Sepoy. The accursed thing which the Government had been driven to remove from them in one shape, it was determined, they thought, in their blind unreasoning terror, to force back on them in another. If they were no longer obliged to touch the greased cartridge with their hands, the very flour which they were eating had been mixed, as they believed, by their insidious enemies with the bone-dust of the same forbidden animals! They would henceforward be looked upon—in fact, they were already looked upon by their more fortunate comrades who had not been thought worthy of the honour of handling the Enfield rifle—as outcasts, with all that that most horrible of names implied in this and in the other world.

With what bitter irony must the words of Lord Dalhousie's farewell Minute, 'Hardly any circumstance of the condition of the Sepoy is in need of improvement,' have sounded now in the ears of his successor, when he woke up to the consciousness that a mutiny of the whole Bengal army was not only not beyond the range of possibilities, but that it was a stern and imminent reality! Strange indeed, we may think it, that Lord Dalhousie had been able so to write, hardly more than a year before; and stranger still it must seem that a panic so real, so wide-spread, so intractable as that which I have described, should have taken possession of the whole Bengal army, and yet not have awakened the fears of each and all of those who were, in any way, responsible for the safety of India. But so it was. Vague intimations, indeed, of impending danger, grounded on the general condition of our Indian army, on the reduced num-

bers of the British force, and on our neglect of the most ordinary precautions, may be discovered in the writings of Sir Charles Napier, of Sir Henry Lawrence, of Sir James Outram, and of Sir John Lawrence. But no Indian official, military or civilian, seems to have imagined the possibility of what was actually about to happen. All were equally taken by surprise when the Mutiny broke out.

What happened at Umballa, within the precincts of John Lawrence's own province, may be taken as a sample of that which was taking place elsewhere. There was at Umballa a detachment of the 36th Native Infantry, a regiment which formed part of the escort of General Anson, the Commander-in-Chief, who was, at that time, engaged on a tour of inspection. When he approached Umballa, on his way to Simla, the non-commissioned officers of the detachment went forth to greet their comrades. They were received with averted looks. The *lotah* and the *hookah* were refused them; they were, in fact, treated as outcasts, and returned to their detachments ruined men! Their story spread like wildfire through the other detachments at the musketry school, and reached the ears of the sympathising musketry instructor, Captain Martineau. It was no news to him. 'We cannot,' he wrote, 'point out mutiny as likely to break forth here or there; for we all agree in seeing it everywhere.'

But, unfortunately, all did not agree in seeing it everywhere, and, among those who saw it least, was the Commander-in-Chief himself. He addressed the detachments kindly enough, told them that there were great misconceptions afloat about the cartridges, and, possibly for the moment, succeeded in convincing them that they were misconceptions. They thanked him, but told him, respectfully, that for one man who would disbelieve the stories, there were ten thousand who believed them firmly. They were willing, if he ordered them to do so, not only to handle, but to fire the objectionable cartridge, but they implored him to spare them such utter social and spiritual ruin. He took time to consider the case, and held council by letter with the Governor-General. It was a choice of evils; and no doubt those high authorities chose what seemed to them to be the lesser of the two. The cartridges were to be

handled and fired by the Sepoys. And the Commander-in-Chief went further, and visited with sharp censure, not only, as it was, perhaps, right he should, the men who had taunted their comrades with loss of caste, but the unhappy officers who had shrunk from and resented the imputation.

The Sepoys obeyed the order, but the incendiary fires which burst out again that night with redoubled vigour in all parts of the cantonments showed, plainly enough, what their feelings were. Still, apparently believing that he had allayed the storm, the Commander-in-Chief passed on to his cool summer retreat at Simla. And if the Commander-in-Chief, who was going in and out among the troops from day to day, and was directly responsible for their well-being and fidelity, saw no danger of a formidable outbreak, we can hardly wonder that the Chief Commissioner of the Punjab, whose relations to them were only indirect, who could only know what he was told, and had abundance of work of his own to do, saw little danger either, or at least failed to perceive its imminence or its urgency.

Sir John Lawrence was in bad health; he had already lingered at Lahore beyond the time when it was safe for him to do so; and, on his way to Murri, he turned aside with his brother Richard to Sealkote, which, like Umballa, had been selected as a depôt for the new musketry instruction, in order that he might judge for himself of the feelings of the Sepoys, and see how the rifle practice was getting on. The result was reassuring, and he communicated his impressions to Lord Canning in a letter written from the spot, on May 4. Its statements are invested with a painfully dramatic interest when we remember that, before he wrote again, the outbreak had already taken place. In the school, he said, were detachments from most of the Punjab corps, all being trained in the new system. Some were learning to handle, others to fire the rifle, and all of them were, to all appearance, highly pleased with a weapon which would enable them to kill an enemy at a thousand instead of a hundred yards' distance, and which seemed particularly suited to their mountain warfare. On the morning of the same day, he had gone to the butts with the Brigadier, and had watched the Regular Infantry also quietly practising. He had made particular inquiries among the officers,

and they all, with one accord, affirmed that no ill-feeling had been shown. Speaking for himself, he had perceived no hesitation on the part of anybody, and had given the Brigadier six small scarves to be shot for as prizes at the end of the course! Before the course was finished, those same Sepoys were to be found shooting at other targets, and with other prizes in view than the scarves which had been offered by the Chief Commissioner.

Sir John Lawrence left Sealkote and passed on to Rawul Pindi. He was on the point of starting thence for Murri, when, on May 12, came the fateful telegram from Delhi, which electrified the Punjab and altered his summer destination: 'The Sepoys,' it ran, 'have come in from Meerut, and are burning everything. Mr. Todd is dead, and we hear several Europeans. We must shut up.' In other words, the Indian Mutiny had broken out, and Delhi, the seat of the Mogul and the historic capital of India, was in the hands of the mutineers.

## CHAPTER XVI.

### THE HOUR AND THE MAN.

MAY-JUNE 1857.

THE story of the Indian Mutiny is a thrice-told tale, and one which, in spite of its romantic interest and the labour which I have necessarily spent in studying it as a whole, I have no intention of attempting to tell here again. My task, as the biographer of Sir John Lawrence, is more limited, but, perhaps, not less difficult. It is to restrict myself, as rigidly as possible, to the history of those movements, which, inspired by his energy, controlled by his prudence, and carried out by his resolution and that of his lieutenants, first, secured from imminent danger the province over which he ruled, then made it the storehouse, the arsenal, the recruiting ground, the base of operations for much that was done outside of it, and, lastly, led up to the crowning achievement of his life—it might have been the crowning achievement of any life—the siege and capture of Delhi. The siege of Delhi, indeed, under all its circumstances, in the historic interest attaching to the city, in the strength, the numbers and the resources of the besieged, in the weakness, the privations, and the difficulties of the handful of men who, perched on a ridge at one corner of its vast circumference, with their rear and both their flanks exposed to attack, called themselves its ‘besiegers,’ finally, in the momentous stake involved in the success or the abandonment of the operations, stands forth with few parallels in modern history.

Before the Mutiny had run its course, but after its crisis had come and gone, an application reached Sir John Lawrence

from the Resident at Berar, asking him for a few hints as to his system. 'It is not our system,' he sent back word, 'it is our men.' And it was the men whom his brother and he himself had first brought together, and then kept together by the methods I have described in previous chapters; the men whom he had recognised, in spite of all their angularity, as having 'grit' or 'backbone' in them; who, now, in the time of trial, instinct with his spirit, and with his simple-minded devotion to the public service, rose to the emergency, were not afraid to face responsibility, and, each in his respective sphere, very often in utter ignorance of what was being done by others, contributed his part towards the great deliverance.

What, then, we may ask, first, were the resources of the Punjab? For such, we may be sure, was the question which crossed and recrossed the mind of the Chief Commissioner when, on receipt of the startling message at Rawul Pindi, he consumed, as I have mentioned in the first chapter of this biography, his own thoughts in silence, pondering the full magnitude of the danger, and the means by which he might best meet and overcome it.

The Punjab was the frontier province of our empire, and as such, it had a larger force—European and native—than, perhaps, any five other provinces in India taken together. The European force consisted, in round numbers, of twelve regiments—of about, that is, eleven thousand men. The Hindustani force, who were chiefly Regulars, numbered thirty-six thousand, and the Punjab local force, chiefly Irregulars, fourteen thousand men. An enormous army this! But was it a source of weakness or of strength? It will be observed that the Hindustani force, over which there was reason to think that the spirit of mutiny and discontent had already, in great part, spread, was half as large again as the European and the Punjabi taken together. The Latin proverb, 'the more slaves, the more enemies,' was therefore one which, *mutatis mutandis*, might be applied with as much truth to the pampered Sepoys of the Punjab, as to the downtrodden Roman slaves. And if this were so, then, our enemies under arms in the Punjab, and trained by ourselves, outnumbered the Europeans in the proportion of three to one!

But what of the Irregulars? were they staunch or not? If staunch, the province might be able to hold its own till succour came from without; if not, the game was clearly up. The chances must have seemed to the eager and anxious mind of the Chief Commissioner, as they seem to us now, when we judge by the event, almost equally balanced. On the one hand, were the memories of the Khalsa and of Runjeet Sing, of Ferozeshah and Chillianwallah, hardly as yet ten years old. There was the gulf not yet bridged over—even if there was no active feeling of hostility—between the dark-skinned native and the fair-skinned and intruding foreigner. There were the dispossessed, and, therefore, necessarily, in some degree, discontented nobles. There were thousands of Sikh warriors, now peacefully cultivating their fields, but men whose right hands had, assuredly, not forgotten their cunning, and in whom the cry of 'The Guru and the Khalsa!' might yet stir yearnings unutterable, and rally them to the battle-field. On the other hand, there was the grand fact that the country was peaceful, was prosperous, was contented, and that it had been governed by the Lawrence brothers, during the past eight years, as few countries have ever been governed. There was the hatred of the Sikh for the Mohammedan who had persecuted him, and whom he had persecuted in turn. There was the contempt of the hardy Punjabi, whatever his caste or his creed, for the less manly races of Oude or Bengal. Finally, there was the hope of plundering the revolted city, the home of the Mogul, under the *Ikbal* of the Company.

And how was the army, whose component parts I have just described, distributed? The European part of it, on which alone, in the first instance, we could place our full reliance, was massed chiefly on two points: first, at or near Umballa, on what had been our frontier line before the conquest of the Punjab; and, secondly, at or near Peshawur, our most advanced outpost towards Afghanistan. At Umballa and the adjoining stations there were four, and in the Peshawur valley three out of the whole number of twelve European regiments. But even at these two most favoured points, the European troops were considerably outnumbered by the Hindustani. At Lahore, at Rawul Pindi, at Ferozepore, at Jullundur, and at Hoshiarpore, the

disproportion was greater still ; while at Umritsur, Sealkote, Gqordaspore, Jhelum, and Mooltan, there were either no European troops at all, or they formed quite an insignificant fraction of the whole. As for the Irregular force, the most critical element in the coming struggle, they were distributed impartially along the frontier of six hundred miles, from Huzara to Mithancote ; and since the annexation they had been, as we have seen, sufficiently employed in rendering that difficult country secure from the raids of the robber tribes outside of it. And even if they should prove staunch to us, the question still remained whether to withdraw them from the frontier and employ them elsewhere would not be to call down upon us other and greater dangers from beyond. Of two regiments belonging to the Irregulars, special mention should be made here. At Hoti Murdan was the famous Guide Corps under Daly, who, as experience had shown, and was soon to show again, were ready to go anywhere and do anything in our defence ; while at the frontier posts, above Peshawur, was another regiment, called from the conspicuous valour which it had shown in the defence of Khelat-i-Ghilzai, in the first Afghan war, the Khelat-i-Ghilzais—and who, like the Guides, might, it was hoped, be depended on to do equally good service now. Once more, besides these, there was the Military Police—the Lahore division of them, under the command of Richard Lawrence, ‘Dick’s Invincibles,’ as his brother used to call them. They were a body of men some fifteen thousand strong, who, being drawn from much the same classes as the Irregulars, might be expected to go with them, whether for us or against us.

There was thus, it will be seen, no single place of importance in the Punjab which could be looked upon, at the moment of the outbreak, as beyond the reach of anxiety. But if there was no point of danger which was held by a force on whom we could depend, neither was there any which was without at least one man on whom full reliance might be placed, a man and not a machine, one who would do all that was practicable, and, perhaps, not a little that seemed impracticable, in our defence. At Lahore were Montgomery and Macleod, Arthur Roberts, the Commissioner, Richard Lawrence, the Chief of the Police, James



Macpherson, the Military Secretary, each of them a host in himself, and each of them, it will be remembered, either bred up in the school, or the warm personal friend of the Chief Commissioner. At Peshawur, the most dangerous place of all, were Edwardes, the Commissioner, Nicholson, the Deputy Commissioner, and Sydney Cotton, in command of the Regulars. At Kohat and, happily, within hail of the Peshawur authorities, was the Brigadier of the frontier force, and the hero of a score of frontier fights, Neville Chamberlain. At Mooltan were Hamilton, the Commissioner, and Crawford Chamberlain, the Commandant of the First Irregular Cavalry, better known as Skinner's Horse. Over the Trans-Sutlej territory presided Lake, over the Cis-Sutlej, Barnes, both of them men after John Lawrence's own heart. At Ferozepore, were Marsden, and Van Cortlandt of Khalsa fame; at Umritsur, Cooper; at Umballa, Forsyth; at Jhelum, Brown; at Loodiana, the most turbulent of cities, Ricketts; at Jullundur, Farrington; at Kangra, Reynell Taylor. Finally, at Rawul Pindi was Edward Thornton, the Commissioner of the District, and at the same place, as luck would have it, the great civilian chieftain, with his soldier's heart, who was thence, during the first three months of the Mutiny, to sweep his whole province with his searching glance, to hold it in his iron grasp, and as time passed on, wielding, by his own inherent force of character, no less than by the irresistible march of events, almost the powers of the Governor-General and Commander-in-Chief in one, was to praise and to condemn, to punish and to reward, to command and to forbid, to stimulate every enterprise, to sanction every appointment, to direct every movement of troops, from the gloomy portals of the Khyber even to the ridge before Delhi.

The absence of Sir John Lawrence from Lahore served to throw the responsibility and the credit of dealing the first and most decisive blow at the rising mutiny, on those he had left behind him there. Perhaps it was well that it was so. Perhaps it was also well that the telegraphic communication between Lahore and Rawul Pindi was interrupted for the time, and that the message which flashed to the capital of the Punjab early on Tuesday morning, May 12, the news of the capture of Delhi by the mutineers, did not

reach the Chief Commissioner by the same route. For it was these difficulties of communication which entitled or compelled his subordinates to act at the outset, as he himself was entitled and compelled, shortly afterwards, to act on a wider field—at once and with decision—and so gave, at the very beginning of the Mutiny, a splendid example of what could be done by men who were not afraid of that bugbear of officials everywhere—the bugbear of responsibility.

The mantle of John Lawrence had fallen, for the time, on his chief lieutenant and his life-long friend, Robert Montgomery; and by no possibility, as I have said before, could it have fallen on worthier shoulders, or on a man who, by his knowledge of the country and of the natives, of the points of danger and of the sources of our strength, above all, by the idiosyncrasies of his own character, was better able to deal with the emergency. Whatever Montgomery did he did quickly, with decision, with a will. If he did not care to estimate all the difficulties which encompassed a particular course of action, it is certain that, by not doing so, he often succeeded in brushing them out of his path. John Lawrence, on the contrary, with all his 'vast vigour and resolution,' was, by nature, cautious and circumspect, so cautious and so circumspect that his enemies have endeavoured to make capital out of it. He liked to turn a thing over in his mind, to be sure that he saw all that was to be said for or against it, before he decided. He could, on emergencies, think very quickly, but he preferred to think at leisure. He 'never acted on mere impulse.' He used to remark that though, while deliberating on a difficult question, he often changed his mind, he generally came back, at last, to the view which he had taken instinctively at first. And thus, in cases of real emergency, he was able to act at once with a feeling of greater confidence than is generally the case with men of his habit of mind. Now, on the momentous question which came before Montgomery and his friends, on that eventful morning, it is hardly conceivable that, bound as Sir John Lawrence was to look beyond Lahore to the safety of his whole province, and, beyond that again, to the safety of the empire, he would not have felt more misgiving than they appear to have done; and it is certain that when he first heard of the disarmament,

he was inclined, in spite of its success, to question its wisdom. It is highly characteristic of his absolute honesty of mind that he expressed his doubt on the subject. If it is true with most people, that 'nothing succeeds like success,' it was not, in his mind at all events, the whole truth. 'Montgomery has done,' exclaimed a high authority at the Head-quarters of the army, when he first heard of the disarmament, 'either the wisest or the most foolish thing in the world.' And the utterance, if it was oracular, was also strictly true. What might not have been the result, if the Sepoys at Lahore had refused to lay down their arms, and, rising in open mutiny, had, some few of them, been cut down at once, while the remainder scattered broadcast over the country, carrying with them the flames of violence and war? In that case, the evil we most dreaded would have been precipitated upon us by our own precautions. There would have been no time to send messengers to the more remote stations in the Punjab to warn them of what was coming; and the Sepoys of Mooltan, and of half-a-dozen other important places, in which the Europeans were few in number, seeing that the case had been prejudged against them at Lahore, and feeling that their turn would come next, would have anticipated the evil day, and rising in all parts of the country, have given themselves one chance more. The question, indeed, in those early days, whether it was better to appear to shut our eyes to the mutinous feelings of the Sepoys, or to arouse them further, to show our suspicions or to conceal them, was a question on which there might well be great differences of opinion; and it was as fortunate for the Punjab that it possessed a chief ruler who, with his wider responsibilities, would have thought twice before he made the first plunge, as that it had others, in the positions next below his, who, seeing the immediate danger, determined, without the hesitation of an hour, to be the first to strike the blow. Again and again, in the course of the mutiny, did this momentous question come to the front. And it is to be noticed that while officers in command of regiments were, from the most honourable feelings, almost always for delay, and for trusting their men to the end, the civilians, with John Lawrence at their head, were almost always for immediate action. The difficulties, indeed, of making a decision were greatly lessened when

once the ice had been broken, and the success of the first attempt at Lahore was an omen—valuable not to the superstitious or the over-anxious alone—of the ultimate result.

The story of the disarmament has been often told before, but it has so important an influence on everything that followed, and is so characteristic of the men whom it was the delight of the Chief Commissioner to gather round him and to honour, that I must indicate its general outlines. The telegram from Delhi reached Lahore early in the morning of May 12, and Montgomery, before the secret had oozed out, at once summoned the chief civil officers to a Council. There was no time for delay; for secret information had reached him, through Richard Lawrence, that all four regiments in the great cantonment at Mean Meer, five miles distant, were prepared to follow the example of their Delhi brethren, whatever it might be. 'Sahib, they are up to this in it,' said a trusty Brahmin clerk who had been commissioned to enquire into their feelings as they strolled into the city to his master, Richard Lawrence, and, as he spoke, he significantly laid his finger on his throat. This was enough for Montgomery, and a motion was brought forward and unanimously agreed to by the Council, that it was desirable that the Sepoy regiments should be at once deprived of their gun-caps and ammunition. But the Civil officers had no authority in such a matter, and so Montgomery and Macpherson rode over to Mean Meer to urge the necessity for action on the Brigadier in command. General Corbett was, at first, naturally taken aback at the boldness of the proposal, but, to his infinite credit, in the course of the afternoon, he made up his mind to go even further, and to deprive his troops not merely of their ammunition, but of their arms.

A ball was to be given, that very night, to the officers of the one European regiment in the station, and as profound secrecy was essential to the success of the intended disarmament, it was not postponed. A dreary amusement enough the dance must have seemed to those few officers who were in the secret, and who felt that they must pass at the dawn of day from the ball-room to the parade-ground, which might well prove their grave! The thoughts of one and of

another may well have leapt back to that other ball-room at Brussels, which heard 'the cannon's opening roar' and ushered in the crowning victory of Waterloo.

A general parade had been ordered, in the usual course, for the morning of the 13th, and Montgomery and Macleod, Macpherson and Roberts, Richard Lawrence, Robert Egerton and Hutchinson, rode over to the ground, prepared to witness the successful execution of the bold step decided on by Corbett, or to be among the first to fall if it should miscarry. The Sepoy force consisted of three regiments of foot, the 16th, the 26th, and the 49th, and of one light cavalry regiment, the 8th. The Europeans who were to disarm them consisted of five companies only of a single regiment, the 81st, with twelve guns. The Sepoy regiments appeared on the ground, quite unconscious that there was anything unusual in preparation. A simple manoeuvre brought them face to face with the Europeans, and made it dangerously easy for them to count their foes. While they were thus drawn up, a Staff officer read aloud to them the orders of the Brigadier. He praised them heartily for their past conduct, but ended by announcing that, as an evil spirit seemed to be abroad in the Indian army, it had been thought advisable to save them from others—and, it might be from themselves—by taking from them their arms. While he was still speaking, the five hundred Europeans fell back between the guns which had hitherto been concealed behind them, and left the Sepoy regiments to look down the twelve black throats of the cannon, which were already loaded with grape, while the gunners stood by with portfires lighted. Just as he ceased to speak, the word of command, 'Eighty-first, load!' rang clearly forth. It was a thrilling moment, a moment in which half a lifetime must have seemed to pass. There was, it is said, a slight hesitation, but the ringing of the ramrods as the charges were rammed home, spoke eloquently in favour of obedience, and so some two thousand muskets, and some seven hundred sabres soon lay piled upon the ground. The Sepoy garrison of the fort which commands Lahore was disarmed, at almost the same moment, by three companies of the same 81st Regiment, and the capital of the Punjab was safe from the mutineers. The whole of the responsibility for these measures rested with

Brigadier Corbett, and to him, therefore, must be assigned the chief share of the credit.

Nor were Corbett and Montgomery contented to secure Lahore alone. Before the day so big with the destinies of the Punjab—and if of the Punjab, then of India—had come to an end, a company of the same valiant regiment, which, without the firing of a single gun, or the shedding of a single drop of blood, had disarmed seven times their number, was speeding away in native carts, which had been hastily collected, to Umritsur. Close to Umritsur and commanding it was Govindghur, a fort named after Govind, the famous Guru. Hard by, was the Golden Temple and the Pool of Immortality. The whole place thus served as a rallying point to the Sikh nation, whether we regard them as the conquering commonwealth of the Khalsa or as the enthusiastic votaries of a reformed creed. Hence its supreme importance. Govindghur was held by a native garrison, but before the next morning dawned, the English troops had traversed the thirty intervening miles, and were safely ensconced within its walls.

On the day preceding the disarmament at Lahore, trusty messengers had been sent out by the ready hand and head of Montgomery to Ferozepore, which was one of the largest arsenals in India; to Mooltan, which, with its important trade and the historic reputation of its citadel, was guarded by only one company of European artillery; and to the fort of Kangra, on the influence of which among the mountain tribes of the far north, I have already had occasion to dwell. Thus, within forty-eight hours of the receipt of the news from Delhi, Lahore and Umritsur had been saved, the garrisons of Govindghur and Ferozepore strengthened, Mooltan and Kangra warned!

And how, meanwhile, was it faring with Sir John Lawrence himself? The first telegram, containing the news of the outbreak at Meerut, reached him early on the morning of Tuesday, the 12th, while he was still in bed. He had been suffering terribly from neuralgia for the last two months, and, on the previous evening, the doctor had rubbed his temples with aconite in order to relieve the intensity of the pain. 'It is a deadly poison,' says John Lawrence, writing to Edwardes on the 13th, 'and in the night it worked into

my eye, and I was nearly blinded.' Such was his condition when the news came. But Lady Lawrence well remembers how, worn out with pain and sleeplessness as he was, he at once left his bed, and sent off telegrams and letters in every direction. After breakfast, Edward Thornton, the Commissioner of the Division, looked in, and while he was conversing with his chief, and while Lady Lawrence and her niece were in the act of pouring a lotion into the injured eye—little wonder is it that the most trivial circumstances of such an epoch-making moment impressed themselves indelibly on the minds of those who were present—the second and more fateful telegram, containing the news of the capture of Delhi and the murder of the Europeans, was brought in and read aloud. The conversation was cut short. It was a time for thought and not for words. For the telegram, rightly apprehended, brought the news that a local outbreak of discontented Sepoys, which might have been stamped out by vigorous measures on the part of General Hewett, who commanded the Brigade at Meerut, had, by his fatal vacillation, been transferred to Delhi and had been transformed into a vast political revolution, which aimed at nothing less than the empire of India.

His first duty was to secure the safety of his own province; but the immediate steps towards that end were already being taken, unknown to him, by Montgomery at Lahore, and with his full knowledge and consent, by Edwardes and Nicholson at Peshawur. His second duty, and hardly second in his own mind, as his telegrams and letters show, was to make his province the means of retaking Delhi. The tendency of official life—if a man be not a really great man—is to narrow the intellect, to make him take an official view of everything, to enslave him to the maxims or traditions of some petty clique or some strong-minded chief. In India this is, perhaps, less the case than in some countries which are nearer home. There, if anywhere, it may be truly said that 'none are for a party and all are for the state,' but, even in India, the tendency may be observed. 'He sat at the feet of so-and-so,' is a phrase which we read till we are tired of it, in the writings of Anglo-Indian historians and essayists. But it is the confession of a fact. It is, perhaps, inevitable that it should be so. Things are done on so vast a

scale in India, the sphere of even a District-officer is so wide, the work to be done is so far beyond his utmost energies, he has so many thousands or tens of thousands of dependents and so very few equals or superiors, that it is little to be wondered at if his District forms his world—a good-sized world, it is true—but still his world. And small wonder would it have been, if John Lawrence, responsible as he was for the safety of so vast, so warlike, and so inflammable a province as the Punjab, had thought that he would be doing his duty right well if he held it firmly in his grip, kept within bounds the 36,000 mutinous Sepoys it contained, and opposing an impregnable barrier to the further spread of revolt from the side of Delhi, or to invasion from the side of Afghanistan, preserved a foothold in his own part of India for English rule, till reinforcements were sent out from England to recover the capital of the Moguls.

But Sir John Lawrence, though he had been brought up among Indian officials, and was one of the best and ablest of them himself, had not got a merely official mind. His spirit was imperial, not provincial. He was able to look beyond the Punjab, to the vast empire of which it formed the youngest part, and instead of sacrificing India to save his province, he would have been prepared, under certain circumstances, as we shall see hereafter, to sacrifice his province in whole or in part, if haply he might save the empire. So, while he sent off by letter and by telegram his warm approval of the proposals made by the knot of good men and true at Peshawur, to ensure the safety of the Punjab, and was elaborating and suggesting many others of his own, he never, for an instant, lost sight of the greater object which lay beyond, and which was, henceforward, for four long months, to fill so much of his mental horizon.

A selection from the stirring telegrams and letters which he wrote on the first of these hundred and twenty days must, perforce, be made; and those to the Commander-in-Chief and Governor-General will, perhaps, best show how he had already girded himself for the struggle; how, seeing where the real point of danger lay, he was already able to predict what course—if there were any delay or vacillation on the part of the authorities—the Mutiny would surely take; and how, in furtherance of his object, he was prepared to brush out



of his way all the cobwebs of officialism, of etiquette, and of routine. It will be remembered that, as Chief Commissioner of the Punjab, he had no technical or legal right to make any suggestions at all to the Commander-in-Chief. The Commander-in-Chief was subject indeed to the civil power, but not to the power of the Chief Commissioner of the Punjab; and had General Anson not been able to see that this was no time to stand on ceremony, he might well have been disposed to tell 'the cobbler not to go beyond his last.' It was almost as creditable to the favourite of the Horse Guards that he was able to recognise the stern integrity of purpose and the statesmanlike insight which underlay the vehement expostulations brought to him hour after hour, or post after post, from Sir John Lawrence, as it was to Sir John Lawrence that he was able, with a volcano beneath his feet, to trouble himself about the more momentous possibilities which lay beyond.

Here is his first telegram, which, though it was addressed to Douglas Forsyth, the Deputy Commissioner at Umballa, was intended for immediate transmission to the Commander-in-Chief:—

May 13.

I think that all the European regiments in the hills, and the Ghoorka regiment at Jutogh, should, at once, be brought down to Umballa, and arrangements be made for securing that cantonment. In the meantime, if the Meerut force has not disarmed or destroyed the mutineers at that place, peremptory orders from the Commander-in-Chief should go down to do so. A large portion of the European force from Meerut, with such native troops as can be trusted, should then march on Delhi, and a picked brigade from Umballa also go down, by forced marches, by Kurnal to Delhi, so that our troops can operate simultaneously from both sides of the Jumna. The city of Delhi and the magazine should be recovered at once. Get the Maharaja of Puttiala to send one regiment to Thaneysur, and another to Loodiana.

His first letter to the Commander-in-Chief ran as follows :

Rawul Pindi: May 13, 1857.

My dear Sir,—I enclose a copy of a telegraphic message which I have just sent to Mr. Forsyth, the Deputy Commissioner at Umballa. I presume that the European force at Meerut has, by this time, acted against its own mutineers, but if it has not done so, peremptory orders should, I think, be sent down by express to this effect. There are

probably 1,800 Europeans of the different arms, who should be able to do this at once.

The next step will be to recover Delhi and its magazine; the latter is the arsenal for all Upper India. A picked force moving from Meerut and Umballa, and operating simultaneously from both sides of the Jumna, if they acted vigorously, could not fail to recover Delhi. Unless this be done, the insurrection will, assuredly, spread, and our European troops become isolated, and, perhaps, be gradually destroyed in detail.

I calculate that the European regiments of infantry and cavalry, after settling affairs at Umballa, and collecting everything worth caring for, might safely march two-thirds of their numbers towards Delhi. This place is ten moderate marches distant; the troops could do it in six or seven. By decisive measures at once we should crush the mutineers, and give support to the well-affected or timid. Time, in such matters, seems to be everything.

For the country this side the Sutlej, up to the Khyber, I make the following proposal. Collect at this place, and subsequently march on to Jhelum, the following Movable Column: two European regiments of infantry, viz. H.M.'s 27th from Nousherah, and six picked companies of the 24th from this place. Add to these the Irregular Cavalry from Shumshabad, and two Punjab corps of Infantry; this force to be commanded by a selected officer, say Brigadier Sydney Cotton, to move on any point and crush rebellion and mutiny. The frontier will be quite safe. Sealkote, Lahore, Ferozepore, and Jullundur can hold their own. The places where danger is to be apprehended are where there is no European force, such as Jhelum, Hoshiarpore, Mooltan, and Phillour. The Movable Column, by its very name, would do much good, and, by rapidly advancing on any point where danger was to be apprehended, would crush mutiny and rebellion.

Everything now depends on energy and resolution. A week or two hence it may be too late. If your Excellency will sanction these arrangements, Brigadier Sydney Cotton and I will arrange all the details. I will send him a copy of this letter, and request he will have H.M.'s 27th Regiment ready to move at an hour's notice. Peshawur, with two European regiments, will be quite safe; and as it is the native Regular army we have to guard against, I consider that that portion of it which is on the frontier, from its isolation and position in a strange country, is less dangerous than elsewhere. The people of the country will, I have no doubt, remain quiet so long as the native army keep quiet, and even afterwards, if we act vigorously and decisively. No delay on account of the season of the year, or for any other reason, should be allowed to weigh with us.

I make no apology for writing to your Excellency plainly and fully. I consider this to be the greatest crisis which has ever occurred in India. Our European force is so small that, unless effectively handled in the outset, and brought to bear, it will prove unequal to the emergency. But with vigour and promptitude, under the blessing of God, it will be irresistible.

Yours very faithfully,

JOHN LAWRENCE.

H.E. General the Hon. George Anson.

P.S.—Should you not consider that Brigadier S. Cotton can be spared, any able officer you like might command the Movable Force. I would name Brigadier Chamberlain, but his army rank is a difficulty.

The telegram sent off on the same day to Edmonstone for Lord Canning, is as characteristic as that to Forsyth for General Anson :—

All safe as yet in the Punjab, but the aspect of affairs most threatening. The whole native Regular army are ready to break out, and unless a blow be soon struck, the Irregulars, as a body, will follow their example. Send for our troops from Persia. Intercept the force now on its way to China, and bring it to Calcutta. Every European soldier will be required to save the country if the whole of the native troops turn against us. This is the opinion of all leading minds here. Every precaution which foresight can dictate is being taken to hold our own, independent of the natives.

Sir John Lawrence enclosed a copy of his letter to General Anson in one of his own to the Governor-General, and from this last I give the following extract :—

Rawul Pindi : May 15, 1857.

My Lord,— . . . We have mutiny at Meerut, mutiny and massacre at Delhi, and all but mutiny at Umballa. What the cause of all this is, it is difficult to divine. I hear that the cartridge question was the commencement of the feeling, and that now the Sepoys think the Government mean to deprive them of their bread, or, in other words, to get rid of them. I am told that the circulation of the chupatty some months ago was connected with this feeling. The 'chupatty' was the symbol of their food, and its circulation was to say that they should hold together or they would lose it all. Be this as it may—that the worst feeling prevails generally in the native army can admit of no doubt. Our European force in India is so small, that it may gradually be worn down and destroyed. It is of the highest importance, therefore, that we should increase our Irregular troops as soon as possible. By my plan, without unduly adding to the number of native troops, we shall be strengthening ourselves in this class of soldiers, while the promotion it will give will prove highly popular. These extra companies can hereafter form the nucleus of new regiments.

I myself am inclined to think that the Native Artillery and Irregular Cavalry will prove faithful as a body. They do not come from Oude and its vicinity, are mostly Mohammedan, and have few sympathies with the Regulars. But, in the event of an emergency, I should like to have power to raise as far as one thousand horse. I will not do this, of course, unless absolutely necessary.

The proposal for increasing the number of Irregular troops, to which Sir John Lawrence here alludes, had already been made by telegraph. It was to the effect that three companies of fifty men each should be added to each Punjab regiment, to each Sikh corps, and to each police battalion—the whole addition amounting to 4,320 men. By this bold and vigorous action at the very beginning of the revolt, he showed that he already realised the extent to which it was likely to spread, and that he had already made up his mind to trust his subjects and to arm them, under proper conditions, against the Sepoys. On the same day he recommended that all leave be stopped, and that all officers in Cashmere should be recalled. He ordered all Sepoys' letters passing through the post to be opened, and if their contents were suspicious, detained. He ordered local levies to be everywhere raised, which were to take charge of out-stations and relieve the suspected Native Infantry guards. He begged Brigadier Campbell at Rawul Pindi to attempt, by full explanations on the subject of the cartridges, to disabuse the minds of his men of the fancies which had gathered round them. He suggested to Edwardes, to Cotton, and to Chamberlain, the component parts of the Movable Column and its early movements. In particular, he ordered the Guides to come from Hoti Murdan to Noushera, and be ready to start for Rawul Pindi at an hour's notice. 'It is want of action,' he wrote to Edwardes, 'rather than the want of means, which may prove disastrous to us;' and already, by this first day's work, he had given pretty good reason to think that, so far as the Punjab and its officers were concerned, neither the one nor the other would be wanting.

Edwardes and Nicholson were, each of them, anxious to have the command of the Mooltani Horse or to accompany the Movable Column, the formation of which they had been the first to suggest. But this proposal the Chief Commissioner thought proper to decline.

I am much obliged to you and Nicholson for the offer of your services, and there are no two men whose services would be more valuable. But I do not think that you could possibly be better placed than where you now are, particularly if Sydney Cotton is moved. The general will require all your help.

There was true wisdom in this. The hour might come, if the Mutiny ran its course, when Nicholson would be even more useful in the interior of the Punjab or at Delhi than at Peshawur. But so long as there were in the Peshawur valley some 6,000 mutinously disposed native troops with arms in their hands, and with less than 3,000 Europeans to watch and to overawe them ; so long as the Mohmunds, the Afridis, the Eusofzyes, and a dozen other semi-hostile bordering tribes had not declared themselves ; and so long, again, as behind them, although happily beyond their mountains, lay the old Afghan Ameer, whom, for purposes of our own, we had deprived temporarily of his crown, and permanently of his pet province, and whom we had only half conciliated by our two recent treaties, John Lawrence felt that Peshawur was the post of danger, and that, at the post of danger, there was need of the services of the man whose presence on the frontier, in view of his resolute will and his commanding character, he had long since declared to be worth the wing of a regiment.

But, amidst all his pressing anxieties, the Chief Commissioner's sense of humour never deserted him, nor was the conversation confined, even in these first days, to the Mutiny alone. One who was present still remembers the animation with which, in the verandah outside his house, in the cool of the evening, so remote a subject as Ruskin's marriage was discussed, Edwardes, the most literary of the party, naturally taking the lead in the conversation ; while another recollects how the Chief Commissioner himself, in one of his early morning rides on a breezy day, meeting a native who was employed in the Telegraph Department, asked him, with a serious face, what was the cause of the noise he heard in the wires ? The man replied that he did not know. ' What ! ' said the Chief Commissioner, ' you in the Department and not know as much as that ? ' The man, little thinking that the Sahib was having a joke at his expense, and, perhaps, imagining that the sound might have more to do with the Mutiny than he was likely at that early stage to know, replied : ' Please, my lord, I have only been a short time in the office ; but I shall soon know all about it.' So again, when Barnes, Commissioner of the Cis-Sutlej States, who had been doing excellent work in bringing the great

protected chiefs of his division to stand by us in our hour of need, telegraphed—as it would seem now, under a misconception—to the Chief Commissioner, that Anson was talking of entrenching himself at Umballa instead of marching on Delhi, the answer flashed back, by the leave or the suggestion of the Chief Commissioner, is said to have been, ‘Clubs, not spades, are trumps; when in doubt, take the trick. It was an answer which the Commander-in-Chief who had published a standard work on whist, would quite appreciate, and it would help, moreover, to carry off those more serious and drastic messages, in which John Lawrence, clinging to his great purpose, kept urging, at all hazards, an immediate advance on Delhi.

And what was happening at Head-quarters meanwhile? The news had reached Umballa on the 11th, and a son of General Barnard had been despatched with it post-haste to Simla. He reached his destination on the 12th, and had the Commander-in-Chief been able to realise its vast importance, that night, we may feel sure, would have seen him far down the road to Umballa in front of his troops; and, once there, he would have been straining every nerve in that great city, the military and civil centre of the District, for an immediate advance towards Delhi. As it was, he arrived only on the morning of the 15th, and then, if not before, he must have received the stirring letter from the Chief Commissioner which I have already quoted. A second followed hard upon it, urging him to make one more effort to recall the Sepoys to their duty by the issue of a new order, abolishing not only *the* new cartridges, but all new cartridges altogether.

It is perfectly useless our saying that the Sepoys should trust in our word that nothing objectionable is used in making up these cartridges. They will not believe it. They feel that their religion is in danger, and are ready to resist and even break out. The very precautions which are taken by us to guard against the danger add to their alarm. . . . There seems to be nothing for it but to give way in this matter, for the present at any rate, to be warned by what has occurred, to take measures to add to our European force in India, and to re-organise our native system.

I consider it my duty to write to your Excellency without reserve. The communications with Calcutta are said to be cut off, and, at any rate, time does not admit of a reference to the Governor-General. Our policy is to act at once, to recall the disloyal to a sense of duty, to assure the wavering, and to strike with effect against those in revolt.

The suggestion as regards the cartridges was at once complied with. But it was too late. It is difficult to say what might not have been the result of such a proclamation, had it been issued by General Anson when he was on his way to Simla in April, amidst unmistakable signs of rising mutiny, but before a drop of blood had been shed.

Three days later, foreseeing the objections to a 'forward policy,' which, according to approved precedents, would be urged upon the Commander-in-Chief by his advisers at Umballa, John Lawrence wrote again, hoping to minimise their effect, and he was able to make his advice more palatable by the good news that the Guides were already on their march for Delhi, and that the Movable Column for the Punjab was not merely forming, but was already, in a great measure, formed :—

Rawul Pindi: May 19, 1857.

My dear Sir,—The *Guides* go from this to-morrow, and expect to be at Lahore on the 25th, and will march thence *via* Ferozepore to Kurnal. The Movable Column will be at Wuzerabad on the 25th, and be there joined by H.M.'s 52nd, the Artillery, and one N. I., all from Sealkote.

I do sincerely hope that you will be able to disengage the Meerut force by an early date, so as to enable it to act. Entrenched at Meerut, it may be safe for a time, but can do no good, and the people of the country will become demoralised, and, eventually, food will fail. Free the Meerut force, which has allowed itself to be paralysed, scour the country, disarm the native troops who have mutinied, or who are known to be faithless; and then act according to circumstances. If Agra and the North-West are in danger, I would say move down from place to place, uniting with the European troops, and destroying the enemy. We shall be all safe this side of the Sutlej, and be able to help you with native troops, like the Guides and others.

If you leave one native Regular corps at Umballa, with a proper proportion of Europeans, and all your ladies, European women, and treasure collected together, and take on the other native corps, all will go well. *What we should avoid is isolation, and the commanders of stations each looking to his own charge, and not to the general weal.* Many will, I fear, counsel delay and caution, but such a policy must prove ruinous. In marching the Europeans, I would take as many elephants and other animals as possible, to carry the weary and footsore. Between Meerut and Calcutta we have but five regiments of Europeans, scattered over the country at wide intervals. What is to become of them, and all our countrymen, if we only hold our own at points where we are strong?

General Anson, if he found at Umballa much to perplex, found also not a little to aid and to encourage him. The Cis-

Sutlej Division, the most difficult and complicated in the Punjab, was in excellent hands, and so also were nearly all its districts. Barnes, the Commissioner, Douglas Forsyth, the Deputy Commissioner of Umballa, MacAndrew, one of the Assistant Commissioners, and George Ricketts, the Deputy Commissioner of Loodiana, had been doing all that men could do to meet the crisis. Already, Forsyth, anticipating the telegram of the Chief Commissioner, which I have quoted, had summoned the 'protected' Maharaja of Puttiala, whose dominions were almost surrounded by our own, to do his part towards securing the safety of his protectors. Already, the Maharaja had responded to the appeal, had come down to an interview, had placed his whole force at our disposal, and had sent forward a detachment to Thanesur, to guard the Grand Trunk Road, the main artery of communication between the Punjab and Delhi. Already, the Raja of Jheend, another of those great 'protected' chiefs, without even waiting to be summoned, had concentrated his troops, and was nearing the cantonment of Kurnal, a point still further down the road, and was thus acting, at the same time, as the vanguard of the English army and as a breakwater against the mutineers, if, in the enthusiasm of their first success, they might be disposed to advance against us from Delhi. Already, the Raja of Nabha, the third of our protected or protecting chieftains, was on his way to Loodiana, the other point of danger specified by John Lawrence in his telegram of May 13. The civil treasury and civil lines at Umballa had already been transferred to the guardianship of the trusted Sikh police. The ferries of the river had been placed under strict watch and ward, and the numerous smaller Sikh chieftains whom we had confirmed in their jagheers, on condition of an annual payment, had been called upon by Barnes to furnish a contingent of men instead—and had, already, complied with the demand.

All this looked well enough. But there were also grave obstacles to an advance, for which the Commander-in-Chief was only partially responsible. He had left behind him something like mutiny even among the faithful Ghoorkas at Jutogh, and something still more like panic, and panic of the most disgraceful kind, among the European inhabitants of Simla. The European regiments, which had come down



promptly enough from the hills to Umballa, found there what is the usual, it may almost be said the invariable, state of things when an English force is called upon to act in an emergency. Nothing was ready. There was a lack of tents, of medical appliances, of carriage, of baggage animals. There were no heavy guns, no reserve artillery ammunition. Even the supply of small ammunition had run short. The siege train was at Phillour, some eighty miles off, and there was no escort available to bring it up. Cholera had begun to show itself in the overcrowded barracks, and, worse than all, the mutinous spirit which the Commander-in-Chief had coquetted with and had left behind him, as though it were of no account, in the Umballa cantonment, when he passed on to the hills at Simla in April, had been smouldering on ever since, and had burst into a momentary flame on the day of the outbreak at Meerut. On that occasion, the mutineers had been coaxed rather than coerced into submission, and Anson now saw clearly enough that he could not afford either to take such men with him to Delhi, or to leave them behind him, with arms in their hands, at Umballa. Why not then follow the example of Lahore, and, utilising the large European force at his disposal, render the disaffected Sepoys at least innocuous by disarming them at once ?

In vain did General Anson himself receive evidence of their mutinous spirit when he ordered them 'to advance by wings,' and they declined to do so. In vain did Sir John Lawrence urge upon him by letters and by reiterated telegrams the step which instincts of self-preservation seemed to demand. The officers of the mutinous regiments still protested their belief in the men. Anson yielded his better judgment to them, and met the appeals of the Chief Commissioner by that *non possumus* which, with those who once allow themselves to plead it, is so omnipotent. The arms which he allowed the mutineers to retain were, of course, soon used against us, and what might have been done, thoroughly and at once, without firing a shot, was only half-done, later on, with much expenditure of time and trouble and life.

What was thought of Sir John Lawrence's letters and telegrams, at the time, by those who best knew, what need there was for them, I find strikingly illustrated in a book,

called 'Service and Adventures with the Meerut Volunteer Horse during the Mutinies.'

Mrs. P—— and her husband (says the writer, R. Dunlop, who had never been a subordinate of John Lawrence) had been exceptions to the sadly general exhibition of fright during the Simla panic. Her husband had gone down to take his place where manhood should; and she spoke confidently and cheerfully, as a brave-hearted Englishwoman ought, of the tremendous task which was still before us. She too spoke, as all were speaking, of Lawrence: Lawrence, who not only got through Herculean labours himself, but sternly forced all malingerers to do their duty; who, with the authority of a master-mind, flashed message after message of abrupt command wherever the electric shock was necessary. One of the earliest victims of the struggle had sunk, she said, killed by an attack of Lawrence's telegraphic messages!

As regards the mutinous Sepoys at Umballa, that Sir John Lawrence and not the military authorities on the spot was right, is shown, beyond all question, by the result. Of three regiments, one of cavalry and two of infantry, which might have been disarmed—as had already been done at Lahore, and was about to be done, without a blow being struck or a drop of blood being spilt, at Peshawur—one, the light cavalry regiment, in order that it might be made as innocuous as possible, was sent off, in detachments, to places where it was not wanted, and from which the men took an early opportunity of deserting. A second, the 5th Native Infantry, was left behind at Umballa with a force to guard it, and being at last detected in a plot to seize the guns of the Siege Train when it arrived from Phillour, the men were disarmed and gradually slunk off to Delhi. The third corps, the 60th, the Commander-in-Chief had proposed to take with him in his advance. But when his small European force demurred, not unreasonably, to facing the enemy with a more than doubtful enemy within their own ranks, he sent them off instead to Rohtuck, where, shortly afterwards, they mutinied, fired on their officers, and went off to Delhi to swell the rebel army.

Sir Henry Barnard was new to the country, and was, therefore, encompassed by special difficulties of his own. But he lost no time in assuring the Chief Commissioner that, having put his hand to the plough, he would not look back. He wrote on the day of his predecessor's death :—

It is only on this day that I expect the necessary supply of ammunition to arrive at Umballa. I have determined (I say *I*, for poor Anson could only recognise me and hand me over the command when I arrived here last night) not to wait for the siege train, but, after the exchange from six to nine pounders has been effected to-day, to bring up all the remainder of the force from Umballa, Mr. Barnes undertaking to convoy the train. The 60th Native Infantry I have detached to Hansi to intercept fugitives or repel advance, a threat which does not seem likely to be put into execution, but it employs them honourably and *gets them out of the way*.

And, on the following day, he writes again :—

I have nothing to say from Meerut. Much has got to be explained. Doubtless it is *fatal* in this country if your European troops are not at once to the fore for any service. But, as regards Umballa, all has been activity and movement; but all were in a manner paralysed, inasmuch as, instead of devoting every thought and energy to the service, the safety of family and friends came uppermost. I would pity, really, rather than condemn. I have lent every assistance in my power. General Anson placed me in command, and, so long as I exercise any power, you may rest assured every energy shall be devoted to the object I have now in view—namely, concentrating all the force I can collect, securing the bridge at Bhagput, securing communication with Meerut. For this object, all is now in actual motion. . . . General Reed has notified his intention of coming here; but, of course, nothing is to be delayed waiting for his arrival. I shall keep you informed of all by telegraph.

John Lawrence replied to these and other letters from Sir H. Barnard on the 31st :—

My dear Sir Henry,—Many thanks for your different letters. I sincerely hope that nothing I wrote to General Anson disturbed his deathbed. I had no intention to reflect on him; to wound his feelings. What I wished to do was to show him the crisis which had arrived; the gulf which was yawning at his feet. No man would more truly desire to care for the European soldiers than I would, for I know their value. But there are times when it is absolutely necessary to expose them. Up here, we could not foresee that they were so badly supplied with ammunition and the necessaries for a march.

The officers about the Commander-in-Chief could not have reflected—I mean those who were opposed to an advance—that in little more than a month the rains would intervene; and therefore that, if we delayed to recover Delhi, we should have to wait until the cold weather. But I should like to ask such officers where British India would have been by that time but in the hands of our enemies. Our troops—I mean the Europeans—where in any numbers, might have held the ground on

which they stood, but no more. As regards the native Regular troops, I believe that all are disaffected and untrustworthy, and that many even of the Irregular Hindustani horse sympathise with them. But amongst the very worst of these troops I should rank those of Umballa. What, I would ask, has been the meaning of all these fires in Umballa for the last three months? Who have been their authors? It is notorious that they have been perpetrated by the native troops.

I look on it that the only safe way to deal with mercenary troops in a state of mutiny is to overpower or disarm them. If we don't, we are in constant danger of their suddenly turning on us, and inflicting a deadly blow. Moreover, at the best, we must employ a body of good troops to watch them, and so weaken ourselves at a time when every European soldier who is available should be brought to bear against the enemy.

So now, at length, to the intense relief of the Chief Commissioner's mind, General Barnard's force was in full march for Delhi. He reached Alipore, twelve miles from his destination on June 5. But here he was obliged to halt till he should be joined by the Siege Train, from Phillour, and by the force which was moving up from Meerut under Brigadier-General Wilson, on the other side of the Jumna. He had not long to wait for either. For, on the following morning, after a series of adventures which those who were responsible for its safety, and who knew what turned on it, might well regard as miraculous, the Siege Train arrived. By dint of incredible exertions, it had been equipped within seven days of the arrival of the telegram which ordered it. But Phillour was eighty miles from Umballa. There was no dependable escort to be found amongst our own troops, and between the two places rolled the broad and rapid river Sutlej, then rising from hour to hour, and bridged only by a bridge of boats which the torrent might at any moment sweep away. It was a race, in the literal sense of the word, against wind and tide, and the Siege Train won—won by two hours only. For two hours had not passed, after the last gun-carriage had reached the opposite shore, before the whole bridge was swept away.\*

The Sepoys of the 3rd Regiment at Phillour, who had offered to escort the Train, were known to be mutinous to the core; and they, too, only just missed their oppor-

\* Cave Brown's *Punjab and Delhi*, vol. i. p. 206.

tunity. In a moment of fatuity, or inadvertence, they allowed the heavy guns to cross the river in front of them, and when the bridge was swept away, they found themselves on the wrong side ! Their further services were dispensed with, for the present, and the ever-ready Raja of Nabha stepped into the gap and supplied an escort. On the 27th, the Train reached Umballa, escaped the machinations of the 5th Native Infantry there, and caught up General Barnard on the 6th of June.

On the 7th, Wilson's small brigade, which in its short march from Meerut had already been twice engaged with the enemy, and had twice sent them flying back to Delhi, arrived, and, on the following day, both forces moved on together inspired by the success which had already been won, and burning with an inextinguishable desire to revenge the brutal murder of English officers, English women, and English children on every black face that would dare to meet them in the open field.

In the brilliant battle of Budli-ke-Serai, fought in the cool of the early morning, they dislodged the enemy from a strong position which they had themselves selected, five miles from Delhi ; and then in a second engagement, fought beneath the full fury of the June sun, swept them from a second position some miles further on, into the city itself. The rout of the enemy was complete. We took thirteen of their guns, and found ourselves once more the undisputed masters of our own cantonments, and of that immortal ' Ridge ' from which, for fourteen long weeks to come, exposed to nearly every suffering to which human flesh is heir, we were never to come down except to smite the foe, and never to abandon till the guilty city which it threatened, or, to speak more accurately, which threatened it, was in our hands.

It was a perilous prize of victory, this narrow ridge, and one which not a few of the cooler heads and braver hearts to be found in our force must, as they settled down to the work before them, have felt that, perhaps, they could have done better without. A force consisting of 3,000 men all told, of twenty field guns, and a small Siege Train, were taking up their position at one corner of its vast circumference, to besiege, or at least to menace, a city of 150,000 inhabitants, defended by strong fortifications which we ourselves had con-

structed and repaired, and which bristled with guns many times more numerous, of far heavier metal, and much better served than any that we could bring against them. Within the city was an arsenal where arms of every description were to be had for the asking, and the whole was garrisoned by an army of revolted Sepoys who were all the more formidable from the vagueness of the guesses we could form as to their numbers, had all been trained and armed by ourselves, were all spurred on by the fanaticism of an outraged religion or the zeal of a rejuvenescent nationality, and were, all of them, determined that since their crimes had made them to carry their lives in their hands, they would sell their lives, if sell them they must, as dearly as possible.

It might well seem, then, to our leaders, as they looked towards the great city with its famous fortress, its teeming population, its historic memories, its glorious mosques and minarets, that they had entered on a hopeless or even an absurd task. But behind that Ridge there went stretching away the Grand Trunk Road, held by faithful Sikh chiefs, and, beyond the horizon, on either side of its course, lay the Punjab, the youngest and most warlike, and yet the most trustworthy of all our possessions; and over the Punjab presided the man who had held and nursed it ever since it came into our hands, had, with the help of his brother, attached it to our rule, and was now prepared to strip it of its last available regiment, and of its most trusted and able officers—nay, if the need arose, to draw in its frontier, rather than allow the imperial enterprise which he had urged, and on which the safety of the whole, as he thought, depended, to be given up in despair. Those, then, who reflected that the Grand Trunk Road led up to a province every man of which was in his right place; that, along it, were to come to our help in rapid and continuous succession, regiments of young Sikhs who had grown up under our shadow, of old Sikhs who had fought against us, of hardy Mohammedans from the border who had often made our lives a burden to us; long lines of baggage waggons and baggage animals, vast stores of shot and shell, and of all the provisions and munitions of war; above all, men like Coke and Rothney, Daly and Taylor, Wilde and Watson, Chamberlain and Nicholson; more than this, that over the whole province, from Rawul

Pindi, urging on the over-cautious, keeping back the rash, supplying the mind that moved the whole, was working, and watching and waiting the ever anxious but never despondent John Lawrence—might well take fresh heart of grace and feel that, if the impossible could be done at all, it was through him that it would be done.

## CHAPTER XVII.

### MUTINY-POLICY OF JOHN LAWRENCE.

MAY-JUNE 1857.

IN the last chapter I have endeavoured to bring into clear relief the steps taken by Sir John Lawrence to ensure that a speedy blow should be struck, not at the limbs but at the heart of the rebellion, and have described the muster and the march of our small army, which, even then, had begun to feel something of his presence or of his spirit in its midst, from the cool heights of Simla to the burning fiery furnace before Delhi. It remained for him now to justify the advice—the foolhardy advice as many deemed it—which he had given; and while he kept his own province in hand and carried on its administration almost as though it had been a time of profound peace, to supply men and money, and all the material of war for the prosecution of that vast and perilous enterprise. How did he set about it?

Lahore and Umritsur had been saved, and Ferozepore and Phillour strengthened, by Montgomery and his coadjutors, while as yet, happily for the English rule, the disastrous news which flashed along the wires had reached the ears of the English authorities alone. But what of the more remote parts of the Punjab, of Mooltan and Sealkote, of Huzara and the Derajat? Above all, what of Peshawur? There were dangers in every course that could be taken. But a few hours' consideration sufficed to show John Lawrence the course in which there were the fewest, and he straightway plunged into it.

Trust the Irregulars and the natives of the Punjab



generally, but utterly distrust the Regular army. Utilise the Irregulars in every way you can. Bring them in from the frontier, where their work has been well done to the points of danger in the interior of the country, where they may have plenty of work of a novel kind. Add largely to the numbers of each existing regiment. Raise fresh regiments, as occasion may require, but do so under proper precautions, remembering that the weapon with which you are arming yourselves may, unless it is well wielded, be turned against yourselves. As for the Regulars, watch them, isolate them, send them to detached frontier forts, where the population are naturally hostile to them, and where it will be difficult for them to act in concert. If any symptoms of mutiny show themselves, disarm them at once. If mutiny breaks forth into act, destroy them, if possible, on the spot. If they take to flight, raise the native populations against them and hunt them down. A few stern examples at first will save much bloodshed in the end. Find out the Sikh chiefs living in your respective districts, and enlist their martial instincts and their natural hatred of the Hindustanis on your side at once. Collect camels and beasts of burden at suitable spots, so that the troops who are moving to the front may face the enemy in the best possible condition. Concentrate bodies of mounted police, so that they may move down on any threatened point in force and crush disturbance at the outset. Remove all Hindustanis from posts of trust or importance. Arrest every wandering Fakir, guard every ferry, examine every Sepoy's letter. Keep the regular work of the administration going everywhere. If you are calm yourself, you will help others to be calm also. Don't be afraid of acting on your own responsibility, but keep me informed of anything and everything that happens, and of anything and everything that you do. Such, in bare outline, are the general maxims which run through all Sir John Lawrence's letters to all his subordinates throughout his province during these first days of the Mutiny.

Accordingly, in obedience to his fiat, and in some cases—notably at Peshawur and Lahore—in anticipation of it, every official in the Punjab was on the alert, and acting as if the safety of the whole province depended on his single exertions.

No thought of flight,  
 None of retreat, no unbecoming deed  
 That argued fear; each on himself relied,  
 As only in his arm the moment lay  
 Of victory.

One of the five native regiments which guarded, or endangered, Peshawur, and was considered to be the most tainted of them all, had been broken up by Cotton and Edwardes, on the day on which the news of the Meerut outbreak reached them, into detachments, and sent to guard the solitary frontier posts of Michni, Shubkudder, and Abazai, against an imaginary invasion of the Mohmunds! On the same day, the suspected 55th, which was quartered at Noushera, at the other end of the Peshawur Valley, and might, perhaps, intercept free communication between it and Attock, was sent sixteen miles northwards to Murdan in the hills, the Head-quarters of the famous Guide Corps. At once, by John Lawrence's directions, that matchless corps marched down under Daly to Noushera, and, without stopping to take breath there, were off again to Attock, and thence—a worthy anticipation of General Roberts's march from Cabul to Candahar—moved on again, with hardly a pause in their amazing race for Delhi. At once, with John Lawrence's leave, Edwardes and Nicholson, his veteran 'wardens of the marches,' utilising their local influence and reputation, called, as they had been the first to suggest, upon the wild khans of the Derajat to raise a thousand Mooltani horse in our support. At once, from all points of the northern and western frontier, regiments of Irregulars hurried in to do garrison duty in the posts of danger, to join the Movable Column, or to prepare for an ultimate advance on Delhi. Such was the 1st Punjab Infantry under Coke, whom the unwearying patience and forbearance of John Lawrence had managed, in spite of his impracticability, to retain at Bunnoo even to this day of trial; such the 2nd Punjab Infantry under Green, from Dera Ghazi Khan; the 4th, under Wilde, from Bunnoo; the 5th, under Vaughan, from Kohat; and a wing of the 2nd Punjab Cavalry, under Charles Nicholson, from the same place. From the cool retreat of Murri, in the extreme north, came down the Kumaon battalion of little Ghoorkas, while, on

the principle of compensation, the 39th Regular Infantry at Jhelum, who were known to be mutinously disposed, were, with admirable judgment, sent out, by John Lawrence's advice, to take the places of the faithful Irregulars in the lonely and distant Derajat, till, amidst the burning heat and the discomforts of the march, their mutinous spirit, and indeed all their spirit, seemed to melt away and evaporate. Once more, too, the redoubtable Futteh Khan Khuttuck came to the front in our defence, and, raising a hundred Pathans, helped us to hold the all-important position of the Attock ferry.

When the news of the outbreak first reached Sir John, Lady Lawrence was at his side. But, a few days later, she was obliged, sorely against her will, to go on to Murri with her children, leaving him to face what he and she at once instinctively felt would be the greatest crisis of his life, alone. A line or two of hers giving her recollections of these few eventful days will be read with interest :—

As to his private affairs, my husband's first act was to write to his brother-in-law, Dr. Bernard, and give all the necessary directions regarding his children, and the slender provision which we had, up to that time, been able to make for them. He saw and felt the possibility that neither of us would be spared to return home. But he never for a moment lost heart. He only 'put his house in order,' so as to be ready for whatever might happen. After that, he gave himself up entirely to his work and left all care for his private affairs alone. What he did and how he worked is well known, and how mercifully he was kept in health and strength. All the neuralgia disappeared in the excitement, and, night and day, he was equal to all demands. What kept him well at this time was, I believe, above all else, his power of sleeping. When telegrams came at night he would get up, do what he could at the time, and then was able to sleep soundly till some other call aroused him. All the current work was kept going, in addition to the demands made on him by the Mutiny. I was obliged to go up to Murri with our children, while he remained for two months at Rawul Pindi, and then went down to Lahore. It was an awful time of suspense. For my own part, I could only feel how thankful I was that I had not gone home to England, for, although we were parted, we had constant communication. He managed to write a few lines to me every day, and I knew, somehow or other, if it had been necessary, that I should find my way to him.

John Lawrence, I would remark here, had shown himself, from his earliest days, to be quite above any feeling of physi-

cal fear. On one occasion, during the second Sikh war, when insurrection was rife all around, he was sleeping in a lonely station, after a hard day's work, the sleep of the just and the fearless. At dead of night there was an alarm, and one of his assistants came in, pale with terror, and exclaimed in an excited tone, 'Do you know that we are in a *cul-de-sac*?' 'Hang the *cul-de-sac*,' replied the awakened and intrepid sleeper, and turned over in his bed, and had the rest of his sleep out.

I came in one day (continued Edward Thornton) when things seemed to be about as hopeless as it was possible for them to be, and found him sitting alone, with his papers before him, his coat and waistcoat thrown off, his neck and arms bare, his head thrown back, looking the picture, as I thought, of firmness and resolution. 'I think there is a chance, Thornton,' he said to me, and, as he said it, I thought he looked the man to make it so. If he died, I felt that he would die hard; and if our lives were saved, I felt then and I feel still, that it was to him we should owe and have owed them. I saw him during the first two months of the Mutiny on every day but one. On that day I went, as usual, to his house and found him gone. He had actually slipped off to see his wife at Murri! It was a flagrant escapade. He had no excuse. But he couldn't help it. He travelled up as fast as he could go, saw his wife for a brief interval, assured himself of her well-being, and was back again at his work within twenty-four hours.

But it is time that I should justify what I have said as to the multiplicity of Sir John Lawrence's labours, his energy, his enthusiasm, his prudence, by such evidence as a few meagre extracts from his letters, written during the early weeks of the Mutiny, can give. They must be taken as samples, and they are samples of the whole. And, first, let us notice his caution.

To Montgomery, who was practically his *locum tenens* at Lahore, he writes, May 15 :—

Farrington should not authorise the Raja of Kupurthulla to raise men. I telegraphed this to him some days ago, but he may not have received the message. I think there may be as much danger from his levies as from others.

I have sent a message to Macpherson to arrange with you to relieve the police horse and police battalion men as much as possible, substituting *Burkandase* in their room, raising men for the purpose. But arrange so as to mix old and new men as far as possible, and keep at the jails a small body of military police as a rallying point. The object, of course, is to have the mounted and battalion policemen ready for rows

or emergency of any kind. Entertain as many men as are *really necessary*, but no more. We must husband our resources. Money may become scarce.

He writes to Montgomery again, on May 18, suggesting another caution which was, perhaps, still more essential in this early stage of the Mutiny :—

I was very ill nearly all day yesterday, but got off various messages. I do not like to raise *large* bodies of the *old* Sikhs. I recollect their strong nationality, how completely they were demoralised for some twelve years before annexation, and how much they have to gain by our ruin. I will not therefore consent to raise levies of the old Sikhs. There is a strong feeling of sympathy between Sikhs and Hindus, and though I am willing to raise Sikhs gradually and carefully, I wish to see them mixed with Mohammedans and hillmen. I would not, in any case, raise more men than are absolutely necessary; for if a blow is not soon struck, we may have all the natives against us, and nothing but our Europeans to rely on. We are raising a thousand Mooltan horse in the Derajat, besides levies in Huzara and Dera Ghazi Khan, and four companies for each of the eighteen regiments of Punjab infantry and police battalions. All these will give full 10,000 men. Cortlandt is raising also one thousand men for service at Ferozepore. Long before all these are ready, if absolutely necessary, we can raise more. But we should do our best to get either tried and loyal men, or, at any rate, young fellows not imbued with the ancient leaven.

I may add here that experience soon convinced John Lawrence that even the old Sikhs of the Malwa might be trusted, and, once convinced of this, he employed them with a right good will and with the best results.

To Major Hamilton, Commissioner at Mooltan, the one link of communication which remained open between the Punjab and the outer world, and a place where there were only sixty European artillerymen to keep in check 3,500 natives, many of whom were indubitably tainted, he writes as follows. It was obvious that force could do little, with such odds against us, but tact, and prudence, and precaution might do much :—

May 22.

The civil and military authorities have done well at Mooltan. Pray do not relax in any of your precautions, and do not trust the Regular infantry. Make every effort to put the old fort into as defensible a state as possible. Throw up breastworks and cover so as to enable a few stout soldiers to resist many. Arrange for temporary cover there.

At the first alarm, get in all the ladies, women, and children. Any levies you may deem necessary, any promises you may make, any rewards you may grant, I will support. Any expenditure which Lieutenant Rose may make, by your authority, will be allowed. We have ordered the 1st Punjab Cavalry and 2nd Punjab Infantry over from Asni and Dera Ghazi Khan to Mooltan. If all is quiet when they arrive, we propose that the Punjab cavalry come on to Ferozepore to reinforce the Commander-in-Chief at Kurnal. A European corps of infantry has been ordered up from Kurrachi to Mooltan; try and arrange for some kind of cover for them. We *must* hold Mooltan to the last. Five regiments of European infantry concentrating from Madras on Calcutta!

If the native infantry break out, I hope you will do your best to destroy them, and, if they disperse, the country people should be urged to follow them and plunder them, and, if they resist, destroy them. Their arms should be brought in and the plunder go to the captors.

Such a letter from John Lawrence was like an electric shock. By extraordinary skill and energy on the part of the authorities the outbreak at Mooltan was warded off from day to day, till at last, when the rising at Jullundur made a similar rising at Mooltan to be a matter of certainty, John Lawrence, as we shall see hereafter, determined to run what he deemed to be the lesser risk. A positive order went forth that the disarmament should be attempted, and, with an extraordinary mixture of audacity and skill, it was not only attempted but accomplished, and that without shedding a drop of blood, by Major Crawford Chamberlain, whom the Chief Commissioner had selected for the dangerous honour.

A short letter to Barnes indicates the policy towards the protected Sikh chieftains, great and small, of the Cis-Sutlej States which had already produced such good results:—

May 23.

Borrow as much money as you require from Nabha and Puttiala. Urge on the Commander-in-Chief to have a military commission to try and hang the men of the 45th N.I. who have been boned. It will have a good effect. Men caught red-handed in the perpetration of murder and attempt at murder should be shot. We are all well in spite of the chiefs being against us at Peshawur. We are raising men and holding the country, coercing and overawing the Regular troops. Any reasonable promises you may make to chiefs and influential men I will support.

The following, to Montgomery, indicates Sir John Lawrence's opinion of the redoubtable Hodson, who was just

then coming to the front again, and shows that he could be stern and thoroughgoing enough with the mutineers when severity was needed. It is all the more desirable to lay stress on this now, as I hope to show hereafter that, unlike many of his countrymen, he was prepared to temper justice with mercy, the moment that it was possible to do so. He was never reckless of human life; he struck that he might save and only that he might save; and he protested with all the energy of his nature against promiscuous bloodshed, and against that indiscriminate vengeance which was the order of the day at Delhi for so many months after it had fallen into our hands, and when all resistance was at an end:—

May 23.

My dear Robert,—Pray resist all reaction, all returns of tenderness and sympathy for the mutineers. It is true that they have failed in their attempts to ruin us, but this is no cause for our making fools of ourselves, and beginning to think that they have been sinned against. I feel no confidence whatever in the native Regulars, but I see no objection to our taking a few of those who have not committed themselves with the Movable Force—guns and Europeans being told off to destroy them on the first sign of disobedience. I hope and believe that good will arise out of all the evil which has occurred. But if our officers already begin to sympathise with these scoundrels I shall despair of any reform.

Hodson is an officer of tried courage and great capacity, but a *mauvais sujet* after all. I am glad we are not to have him. Help him by all means, but too many men raised by an influential man, if for permanent service, are not good, if, only for the nonce, it does no harm. My reason for not advocating taking men for permanent service from chiefs is this: they will certainly stick in a good many ribs. If these are allowed to remain, the *ressalah* (troop of horse) is inefficient; if turned out, the chief is aggrieved. I am glad you gave the telegraph men a month's pay; they have deserved it well.

The letters I have just quoted will give some idea of the multiplicity of details and of the minute local and personal peculiarities which John Lawrence had to keep in mind throughout. I have selected them for this purpose, rather than because of their intrinsic interest or importance, and it will be observed that I have taken them all from the correspondence of the first fortnight of the Mutiny.

The following extract from a letter which was written to Lord Canning at the close of that first fortnight, and con-

tained a masterly review of the progress of the Mutiny and of his measures for its suppression, will show that he never allowed himself to be lost in the details of his work, but that he was able, thus early, to look forward to the measures which would render a pacification not only possible but durable :—

May 23.

My Lord,—Your Lordship will, no doubt, have received all the news from this quarter. I asked Mr. Barnes, the Commissioner of the Cis-Sutlej Division, to send on all the information which might appear desirable. I believe, with God's help, we shall do well, hold our own, and be able to reinforce the Commander-in-Chief. The great point is that he should advance on Meerut, extricate the force there, and enable them to act.\* He will then be in a position either to move on Delhi or down the Doab towards Agra, as circumstances may dictate. . . .

We must continue anxious as long as Delhi holds out and the insurrection about Meerut is not put down. So long as the Irregulars remain loyal, all must go well; but if they turn against us we shall have a difficult game, and shall then have to abandon the frontier and concentrate our European force. But, even then, I think we shall be able to hold our own until the cold weather. Some natives will always remain true to a compact body of Europeans who show a firm front. The Irregulars are behaving admirably at present; the only danger which I foresee is that which may arise from their seeing us stand on the defensive. The country also is with us, and the people are behaving loyally.

Edwardes and Nicholson are raising new levies, and, on the whole, I think we shall be able to hold Peshawur, even if all the native infantry revolt. At this place (Rawul Pindi), we have 200 European infantry, mostly weak men, but able to fight, and a troop of capital European artillery. We have also one regiment of native infantry who have hitherto behaved well, and whom we can overpower, if necessary. Lahore, Ferozepore, and Jullundur are all safe at present, and I have no anxiety for any of them except Jullundur, where the native troops still retain their arms, and may be reinforced from Hoshiarpore and Phillour. The magazines at Phillour and Ferozepore, as well as the forts of Lahore and Govindghur, are garrisoned by Europeans, and we are putting provisions in them.

Your Lordship need not fear for us. We have some excellent officers in the Punjab, and all, both civil and military, are united and resolved to maintain our own honour and the security of our power if it can be done. No officers could have managed better.

I earnestly hope that your Lordship will not authorise the raising of any new *Regular* native infantry of any kind. If ever we are to have a thorough and radical reform of the native army, it will be now. No

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\* The force at Meerut only needed 'extrication' from its own utter helplessness and incapacity. It never was in the least danger after May 10.



half-measures will do. Nothing short of the late transactions would convince us of the folly and weakness of the old system. Pray, my Lord, don't authorise any proposition for converting Irregular regiments into Regulars. In a few years, they will be little better than the old ones. The men will not like, and the native officers will dislike it, for they will become nonentities. Those Regular native infantry corps which remain faithful can be maintained. All others should be disbanded. By keeping up more Irregulars we shall obtain the means of meeting the extra cost of additional European regiments.

I would further suggest that all native regiments who have not actually fought against us, but have shown by their conduct what was in their hearts, be hereafter disbanded. We might have three classes : the really faithful, to be maintained, and even, in especial cases, to be rewarded ; the discontented and mutinous who have held cantonments in which fires have constantly occurred, to be disbanded ; and thirdly, the insurgent troops who have fought against us, who have broken out into open mutiny, and murdered our officers. These I would hunt down as Dacoits and Thugs have been hunted down, and when caught they should be hanged, transported for life, or imprisoned for terms of years. Where native regiments, or any part of a regiment do good service, I should issue complimentary orders to them. I have suggested to the Commander-in-Chief to do so towards the 10th Cavalry at Ferozepore, and a remnant of the 3rd at Meerut.

Nor was John Lawrence content to communicate with those only who, as his superiors or as his subordinates, had a right to look for reports or for instructions from him. The intimate knowledge of the town of Delhi, of the district, and of the inhabitants, which he had acquired during his first ten years' residence in India, he was anxious to impart to all to whom it could be of use. He had intended to issue an appeal, in his own name, to the chiefs of the Delhi district, calling on them to prove their loyalty on the approach of our army, by rallying to its support, by keeping the peace in their respective neighbourhoods, and by giving supplies and information. But finding that Hervey Greathed had been deputed by Colvin the Lieutenant-Governor of the North-West—in whose charge Delhi was still, by courtesy, supposed to be—to accompany the Meerut force, he determined to act through him, and opened a correspondence with him which was kept up throughout the siege, and with the best results. In his first letter he enumerated the chiefs to whom he had proposed to appeal ; advised that separate letters should be written to certain of the officers of the palace who, from his personal knowledge, he thought might be true

to us at heart ; described the state of the ditch, the walls, the gates of the city, as he remembered them ; discussed the points where an attack might best be made ; and named the villages on the road between Kurnal and Delhi where the most abundant supplies, or the boldest and most knowing spies could be obtained—men who would find little difficulty in procuring information from the interior of the city. To Colvin also he wrote direct, suggesting various precautions which had been found useful in the Punjab. In particular, he advised that each District officer in the North-West should be empowered to raise strong bodies of police, both horse and foot, which might help to keep the peace in their respective districts till the capture of Delhi should set the troops at liberty.

With Bartle Frere, the Chief Commissioner of Scinde, and the representative, therefore, of a system which was, in many respects, opposed to that of the Punjab, Sir John Lawrence was in constant communication throughout. Frere landed at Kurrachi, on his return from furlough, just in time to hear of the outbreak of the Mutiny, and he acted with a promptitude and a fearlessness of responsibility surpassed by no one in the adjoining province. John Lawrence had written to him on the day after the news reached Rawul Pindi. But Frere, without waiting to be asked, or even to get leave from Lord Elphinstone at Bombay, at once, and upon his own responsibility, sent off such reinforcements as he could spare, or could hardly spare, to what he conceived to be the chief point of danger. With only two weak European regiments and one troop of Horse Artillery to hold in check his province of two million inhabitants and four native regiments, he sent off at once two hundred Fusiliers to Mooltan. He saw that it was on the Punjab and not on Scinde that the safety of India would, in the long run, depend, and, just as John Lawrence was resolved to denude the Punjab of troops in order to push the siege of Delhi, so, on a smaller scale, but to the utmost limit of his means, was Frere resolved to strip Scinde in order to reinforce the Punjab. 'When the head and heart are threatened,' he wrote to Lord Elphinstone, in words that have a ring about them which would have gone straight to John Lawrence's heart, 'the extremities must take care

of themselves.' And he was as good as his word. The 1st Bombay Fusiliers, the 1st Beluch Battalion, the 2nd Beluch Battalion, were despatched, in rapid succession, to the Punjab, and that such all-important points as Mooltan and Ferozepore were firmly held, in spite of all the danger which threatened them, was due, in part at least, to his unstinted aid. John Lawrence writes to him thus, as early as May 28 :—

Many thanks for your notes and all your care for us. The two hundred Europeans for Mooltan will be a grand aid. With the European artillery, one hundred strong, they will make all safe. The sooner they arrive the better ; as it will enable us to employ a corps of Punjab infantry who have come here from Dera Ghazi Khan.

And, looking back calmly at all that had happened when the crisis was over, he wrote thus in his ' Mutiny Report : '—

From first to last, from the first commencement of the Mutiny to the final triumph, Mr. H. B. E. Frere has rendered assistance to the Punjab administration just as if he had been one of its own Commissioners. . . . The Chief Commissioner believes that probably there is no civil officer in India who, for eminent exertions, deserves better of his Government than Mr. H. B. E. Frere.

While John Lawrence had thus been keeping his finger on the pulse of his province, a great crisis had come and gone at Peshawur. We last saw him closeted with Herbert Edwardes and with others of the wiser heads in his province, at Rawul Pindi, and, on the 21st of May, Edwardes returned to Peshawur in full possession of his chief's views, and prepared, on the first alarm, to advise the disarmament of the Regulars there. It was the very nick of time. Already, Nicholson, who was not a man to keep more troops than were absolutely necessary about him, finding that Peshawur was too weak for the dangers it had to face, had asked, by telegraph, that a wing of the 27th Regiment, which was on its way from the frontier to the interior, might be recalled to defend the Attock fort and ferry. Already, letters had been detected passing from one of the native regiments at Peshawur to the detachments in the frontier forts, naming the day on which they were all to flock into Peshawur, ' eating there and drinking here,' for such was the vigorous expres-

sion which indicated the speed that was required. Already large piles of intercepted correspondence were in the hands of the authorities, which seemed to show that Peshawur was only one link in the chain of preconcerted mutiny connecting the fanatics of Sitana beyond our frontier with those of Patna or Benares. And now, at midnight, a message reached Edwardes that mutinous intentions were already passing into mutinous acts at Attock, at Noushera, and at Murdan.

There was no time to be lost. Not a man could be spared from Peshawur to coerce these mutineers, while much larger numbers, with mutiny in their hearts and arms in their hands, were left behind in the cantonments there. On the other hand, in a few hours, the news which was, at present, the monopoly of the authorities would filter through to the city and the native troops, and the smouldering embers would be kindled into a flame which it might be beyond the power of the Empire to extinguish. 'Peshawur once gone,' said a trusty Sikh chief to the magistrate of Umritsur, 'the whole Punjab would roll up like this,' and as he spoke he began slowly with his finger and thumb to roll up his robe from the corner of the hem towards its centre.\* 'You know on what a nest of devils we stand,' writes Edwardes to the Chief Commissioner. 'Once let us take our foot up, and we shall be stung to death.' And Edwardes and his companions had no intention of taking their foot up, but rather of putting it down and keeping it there.

He and Nicholson were sleeping, as they had arranged, under the same roof and in their clothes, so that they might be ready for any emergency. It was just midnight when the news of the outbreak at Noushera arrived, and it was not many minutes after midnight when they both found themselves standing by the bedside of Brigadier Cotton. Their business was soon told, and a Council of War summoned. The 'politicals' were, as usual, for instant action; the military officers, as usual, with a chivalrous blindness which it is impossible not to make allowance for, and even, in a measure, to admire, still had 'implicit confidence' in their men. High words passed. Cotton listened to both sides, and decided for disarmament. Four regiments, three of in-

\* Cave Brown's *Punjab and Delhi*, vol. i. p. 153.

fantry and one of cavalry, were to be disarmed in the early morning ; while the 21st Infantry, of whom better things were hoped, was, for the present, to be spared and trusted. It was a critical moment ; almost as critical as that, a fortnight earlier, at Lahore ; and, as at Lahore, the civil officers rode down to have a finger in the business which was to make or mar them. The four regiments might resist, as indeed some of their officers who most believed in their fidelity, with strange inconsistency, predicted that they would ; they might be joined by their brethren who were to be spared for the present, but must feel that their own turn would come next ; the ' legion of devils ' in the city and the surrounding country would then be up, and then——

There were two Queen's regiments, two batteries of Artillery, and, strangest of all, a body of Afridi volunteers, our inveterate foes, just picked up from the Kohat pass, to do the work of disarmament, and they did it. The four suspected regiments, isolated from each other, and given no time to think or to speak, did as they were ordered ; and as the heaps of piled arms grew in size, ' here and there,' says Herbert Edwardes, ' the spurs and swords of English officers fell sympathisingly on the pile.'

The effect of the disarmament, ' a master stroke,' as John Lawrence called it, was instantaneous on the surrounding district, and was soon felt along the frontier generally. Of the 2,000 Mooltani horse which had been called for by Edwardes during some days previously, only 100 had as yet responded to our call. Why should the rough borderers join what was, probably, a losing and was, certainly, a doubtful cause ? But now the case was altered. ' As we rode back from the cantonments,' says Edwardes, ' friends were as thick as summer flies, and levies began from that moment to come in ;' and he goes on to describe, in a graphic passage, which is, unfortunately, too long to quote here, the process of enlistment which, henceforward, went on from day to day ; the eager emulation, now that there was money to be freely won and blood to be freely spilt, of every idle vagrant, of every professional robber, of every truculent student at the mosques, to join our first levies, while every unconquerably vicious brute which its owner could not ride, and every miserable screw which could hardly drag itself along to the scene of

action, or even to the knacker's yard was importunately pressed upon us, and formed the nucleus of a new Irregular—a very irregular—cavalry. And before long, even from beyond our border, vill inous Afridis, Mohmunds, and Eusofzies, men who had spent their lives in robbing and killing our subjects, or belonged to tribes who were, even now, under our ban, came flocking in, with penitence in their faces and doubly-dyed rascality in their hearts, delighted to pay off old scores upon the Sepoys, whom they derisively styled the *Kala Kaum* (those niggers), to guard us against those who should have been the first to guard us, and to hunt them down like vermin, when they had the chance.

The Peshawur garrison was now, at length, able to spare some men to act against the mutineers who had gathered at Murdan. On the evening of the day following the disarmament, a force of 300 European infantry, 250 Irregular cavalry, and 8 guns, under the command of Colonel Chute and accompanied by Nicholson as 'political officer,' set out from Peshawur, and, early on the following morning, they arrived at their destination. Seeing their approach, the 55th—with the exception of some 120 men, chiefly Punjabis, who remained with their officers—fled towards the Swat frontier. The European infantry, tired with their march, were unable to overtake them; and the Irregular cavalry showed, by their lagging pursuit, that they were not prepared to act against their brethren. It was a danger which had been long feared, but never more than half acknowledged. Now, then, was the chance for Nicholson. Putting himself at the head of a mere handful of mounted Sowars, as though he were determined to justify his chief's expression in its most literal sense, that he was 'worth the wing of a regiment,' he flung himself with 'terrible courage' on the flying foe, and, seeming to multiply himself many times over as he rode hither and thither, laid low, with his own stalwart right arm, dozens of men who, as he admitted afterwards in genuine admiration, fought desperately. Throughout that livelong day, beneath the burning heat of the sun, the pursuit continued, till one hundred and fifty Sepoys had fallen, no small proportion of them beneath Nicholson's own hand. As many more were taken prisoners, and the rest, some five hundred in number, many of them wounded,

managed to escape over the friendly Swat border. It was not until seven o'clock in the evening that this new Homeric chieftain rode back to the point from which the pursuit had begun, after having been some twenty hours in the saddle, and having ridden some seventy miles without a change of horse! It was the first of those 'Nicholsonian' deeds of daring which were to end only with his life at the capture of Delhi.

A more terrible fate awaited the five hundred Sepoys who had escaped Nicholson's avenging arm. Driven out of Swat, after a miserable sojourn of a month, by its fanatical inhabitants, they managed to cross the Indus on inflated skins and rafts, and, in sheer despair, determined to attempt to make their way through the savage defiles of the tremendous precipices of Kohistan to Kashmere. But John Becher, the Deputy Commissioner of Huzara, was on the look-out for their approach. He raised the wild mountain clans against them. With an ever-watchful enemy blocking up in front of them the goats' paths by which they moved, or pressing hard upon them in the rear, they fought or struggled on for a weary fortnight, their difficulties and dangers increasing at every step, till at last, their money spent, their strength exhausted, their weapons, many of them, thrown away in the struggle for bare life upon the slippery ledges, footsore, and haggard, and hungry, the miserable remnant, 124 in all, surrendered at discretion, and were hanged or blown away from guns in different parts of the Huzara district. Their sufferings might have touched a heart of stone, and those who knew Becher well knew that, brave as he was, his heart was of the tenderest. But he felt, and probably with good reason, that at this early and most critical stage of the Mutiny, stern severity would prove the truest mercy in the end. 'We are doing well,' writes John Lawrence, 'in every district; Becher famously.'

But, though four regiments had been disarmed and one all but annihilated, all danger was not yet over in the Peshawur District. The detachments, indeed, of the mutinous 64th which had been relegated to the frontier forts were disarmed, without difficulty, by Nicholson and Chute during the few days which followed the flight of the 55th from Murdan. But the operation was not completed a day too soon. For

Ajoon Khan, a noted freebooter, who was supported by the Akhund of Swat, had already come down to our frontier, and, by pre-arrangement with the Sepoys, was on the point of being admitted into the forts. Moreover, there was the much greater danger which the pursuit at Murdan had forced us to take into account, the general disaffection of the Irregular cavalry, or, at all events, their determination not to act against their brethren. A rising on their part would, it was feared, be supported by the four regiments which had been nominally disarmed. I say *nominally* disarmed; for in a wild country like Peshawur, where every native bore arms, and almost every one was a cut-throat from his cradle onwards, weapons were always to be had for the asking, and rumour said that large quantities of them were already, or were still, secreted in the lines. Would it be better to run the tremendous risk which an attempt to disarm the three cavalry regiments would involve, or to attempt by extra precautions, to tide over the interval; an interval, as it was then thought, not of months but of days, till the news of the fall of Delhi should make us masters of the position? Nicholson, finding that even the camp-followers of the European regiments were talking in the bazaars of a Holy War, advised delay; and where Nicholson advised delay, everyone else might be sure that there must be grave reason for his doing so. Urgent letters were written by Nicholson himself, by Edwardes, and by Cotton, to John Lawrence, begging him to send them reinforcements, even if, in order to do so, he should find it necessary to recall troops which were already on their way to Delhi.

It was a sore trial to Sir John Lawrence. But he recognised the necessity and acted without hesitation. He ordered Wilde, who, with his splendid regiment, 700 strong, was already on his march, to turn back and hold Attock. He bade Henderson send up 250 cavalry from Kohat to Peshawur, asked Becher to send thither every man whom he could spare from Huzara, and he himself despatched 220 of the police from Rawul Pindi. 'We have not,' he writes to Edwardes, 'kept a native soldier who is worth anything here. We are very anxious for your safety. I cannot fail to see how precarious your position may prove.' General Reed had just left Rawul Pindi to assume the 'provincial' command before



Delhi, and Sir John Lawrence had authorised his taking with him the Movable Column as far as Kurnal. 'It is a force,' he gleefully remarks, 'which is alone sufficient to take Delhi and to keep it.' It was a part of this very force which he was now driven to recall for the defence of Peshawur, and—to make matters worse—he was informed by Reed, about the same time, that General Johnstone, who was then at Jullundur, would be appointed Brigadier-General and take the command of the Peshawur Division which he had just vacated.

This proposal meant, as John Lawrence knew too well, that military capacity and energy of a high kind would be superseded by incapacity and vacillation. Such qualities were dangerous enough anywhere, as the experience of a few days later was to prove at Jullundur. But, at Peshawur, they would be absolutely fatal. It was no time for mincing matters or for asking himself whether he had any right to interfere. He had remonstrated boldly even with Lord Dalhousie, in time of peace, on an appointment he had intended to make to the Commissionership of Peshawur and had won the day, and he was not likely, therefore, to be silent with Lord Canning now. He had taken on himself, as soon as he heard of Anson's death, to suggest to the Governor-General by telegraph that Patrick Grant, a man 'who knew and understood the Sepoys and had good common sense and knowledge of his profession,' should be summoned from Madras to take the Command-in-Chief; and now he telegraphed even more urgently, requesting that Cotton and not Johnstone should succeed to the post for which his previous services and his present position marked him out. 'I am afraid,' he wrote to Edwardes, 'that it is too heterodox an arrangement, to prove acceptable.' But Lord Canning felt that it was heterodoxy and not orthodoxy which must save India, and he accepted the suggestion. 'I hope,' writes Sir John Lawrence to General Reed, 'that General Johnstone will not be sent up here. No officer could have managed better than Brigadier S. Cotton, and, if he is superseded, I do not know what will happen. I beg that General Johnstone may be kept where he is, or, at all events, not sent up to Rawul Pindi to command this Division.'

It may have been observed that I have repeatedly quoted

letters in which Sir John Lawrence advocates strong measures in dealing with the mutineers. And I have done so purposely, in order that I may now lay all the more stress on what implies the possession of much rarer and more admirable qualities, and marks him out as pre-eminently the man to have held the reins of power at such a crisis—I mean his rigid sense of justice, and his determination, while he was for severity, so long as severity was necessary or was likely to prove mercy in the end, not to allow a drop of blood to be shed in the mere luxury or wantonness of revenge. Unlike some of his subordinates, and unlike, it may be added without injustice, too many of our countrymen, at that terrible time both in India and at home, he kept his head throughout. He never joined in the cry for indiscriminate vengeance, a cry which he thought to be as impolitic as it was un-Christian and unjust, and which was sometimes heard most loudly in quarters where it was least to be expected or excused. He knew, as his letters show, how much there was to be said in extenuation of the Sepoys' guilt; how much the blindness of the authorities had contributed towards it; how much was due to their state of blind panic, to their credulity, to their love for their religion. He knew how many, with intentions the most loyal, were hurried away by the stream, and, like many other good men and true, who, happily for our fair fame, chanced, at that time, to be filling the most responsible situations in the country, he thought it alike unstatesmanlike and unjust,—when once the necessary example had been made,—not to draw distinctions of guilt, not to leave a place for repentance, not to put a strict restraint on the wild yearning for revenge. In this respect, he deserves to be placed side by side with the noble-minded Governor-General, whose nick-name of 'Clemency,' first given to him in England as a term of the bitterest reproach, will, through all history, like that of the 'Cunctator' at Rome, form his highest title to the admiration and gratitude of Englishmen.

From the very beginning of his high official career John Lawrence had set his face against the lax notions of justice and of legal evidence which, owing chiefly to their want of civil and legal training, prevailed among some of the ablest of his soldier-subordinates. Again and again the civil

authorities at Lahore had been driven to overrule wholesale the capital sentences, passed by honest but hastily judging District officers on the frontier. On one occasion, a dozen such sentences for murder were sent up from Peshawur to be ratified by the central authorities at Lahore; each charge being substantiated only by the unsupported assertion of one single native, who, as he deposed, with charming simplicity, had had the good luck to come in at the exact moment and to see the deed done! 'Why, I would not hang a *chiriya* (a bird),' remarked John Lawrence, 'on such evidence,' and he straightway quashed the whole. The same rigid sense of justice governed him throughout the Mutiny, and stood him in good stead now, when it was the fate, not of a bird, but of 120 mutineers of the 55th Regiment, whose fate was trembling in the balance. There was no doubt that every one of them had been guilty of mutiny and desertion, that they had been taken with arms in their hands, that in the eye of military law they deserved to die, and that, in the interests of mercy as well as of justice, a stern example must be made. The authorities at Peshawur had already made up their minds.

The trial of the 55th prisoners (writes Edwardes, on June 1, to John Lawrence) will begin on Thursday; and, as they may be tried in a lump for the charge of 'Mutiny,' they will be disposed of at once; and we propose to make an awful and lasting example by blowing them away from guns before the whole garrison. Five can be placed before each gun and two troops of artillery will throw sixty of them into the air at once. A second round will finish the matter; and, awful as such a scene will be, I must say my judgment approves it. The Native Army requires to be appalled. They have not shrunk from appalling us.

The next post took back the Chief Commissioner's reply, though his opinion had not been asked and he had no strict right to interfere.

In respect to the mutineers of the 55th, they were taken fighting us, and, so far, deserve little mercy. But, on full reflection, I would not put them all to death. I do not think that we shall be justified in the eyes of the Almighty in doing so. One hundred and twenty men are a large number to put to death. Our object is to make an example to terrify others. I think this object would be effectually gained by destroying from one-fourth to one-third of their number. I would select all those against whom anything bad could be shown—such as

general bad character, turbulence, prominence in the disaffection or in the fight, disrespectful demeanour to their officers during the few days before the 26th and the like. If these would not make up the required number, I would then add to them the oldest soldiers. All these should be shot or blown away, as may be deemed expedient. The rest I would divide into batches, some to be imprisoned ten years, others seven, others five, others three. I think that a sufficient example will thus be made, and that the distinctions that will have been made will do good and not harm. The Sepoys will see that we punish to deter, and not for revenge; and public sympathy will not be on the side of the sufferers. Otherwise, men will fight desperately to the last, as certain they must die.

It is quite true that it is very inconvenient and even dangerous having so many rascals in our jail, but this we cannot help. We must suffer the inconvenience. . . . What I have written regarding the mutineers is simply my own opinion. Their fate will rest with the officers comprising the court-martial.

The next day, he recurs to the subject in still stronger terms :—

I think the arrangement to shoot every tenth man of the deserters of the 51st is good and reasonable. The example will prove efficacious, and there is nothing revengeful in the measure. But the intention of blowing away all the 55th seems to me horrible; and I entreat you to use your influence and get Cotton to modify the decision. If one-third or one-fourth were blown away, it would answer every purpose, excite equal terror; and not the same horror.

On the same day, he wrote to Cotton, direct, with equal urgency :—

I trust that you will not destroy all the men of the 55th who have been seized. . . . Such a wholesale slaughter will, I think, be cruel and have a bad effect. It will be tantamount to giving no quarter, and therefore men in similar circumstances will have no inducement to yield, but rather to fight to the last. We should also recollect that these Sepoys might have committed many atrocities, whereas they perpetrated none. They did not destroy public property, and they saved the lives of their officers when in their power. These circumstances entitle them to consideration, which I beg they will receive at your hands. I have felt vexed at seeing the way in which mutineers and murderers have escaped punishment in other places. I am a staunch advocate for punishment, but in proportion to the offence.

It is hardly necessary to add that remonstrances so vigorous, so statesmanlike, and so Christian met with the response

that they deserved. Forty men only, instead of a hundred and twenty, and those the most guilty of the whole, were blown into fragments in the presence of the assembled garrison of Peshawur and of vast numbers of spectators from the surrounding country. It was a ghastly spectacle enough; and that it was not more ghastly still, that it did not excite loathing and repulsion as well as awe, that it was looked upon as a measure of stern retribution rather than of indiscriminate revenge, was due to the man who never lost his head; who 'never acted on mere impulse,' and, happily for the interests of mercy, as well as of justice, held the chief place in the Punjab.

The energy and promptitude which had been so abundantly displayed at Lahore and at Peshawur were brought into still stronger relief by the miserable contrast presented to them at Jullundur. At Ferozepore there had been some bungling. But at Jullundur it is not too much to say that there was a display of incapacity and neglect on the part of the chief military authorities, to which the history of the Mutiny, happily, affords few parallels. At that important cantonment there were three native regiments, two of infantry and one of cavalry, all of them well known to be tainted. On the other hand, there was the 8th Queen's Regiment, supported by an adequate artillery, and by the ever active aid of the Raja of Kupurthulla, another of those protected Sikh chieftains who seemed determined in this, the hour of our need, to pay back all that they owed us. Lake, the Commissioner of the Division, and Johnstone, who was in command of the station, had happened to be absent from Jullundur at the time of the Meerut outbreak. But their places had been ably filled by Colonel Hartley, of the 8th Queen's and by Captain Farrington, the Deputy Commissioner. Every precaution for the protection of the cantonments in the station had been promptly taken. A detachment had been sent off to secure the fort and arsenal of Phillour, some twenty miles distant, and the civil treasure had been transferred, by express order of Sir John Lawrence, from the care of the Sepoys to that of the European soldiers. 'Its loss,' he said, 'would strengthen the enemy, and be really discreditable to us.'

Almost the first step of Brigadier Johnstone, when he

came down from Simla, was to order the treasure to be restored to the care of the Sepoys, and when peremptory orders were flashed down from Sir John Lawrence and General Reed to undo what had been done, it was already too late. For even the civilians, who had been most scandalised by the fatuity of the General, feared now that to reverse the step would precipitate the outbreak. Once and again, in May, John Lawrence had advised disarmament, and, on June 5, he telegraphed to Lake to urge the Brigadier to carry it out at once. The words of the telegram I have been unable to discover, but his letter to Lake, written on the same day, will indicate its character :—

If we have any accident at Delhi, you may depend on it that we shall have an outbreak among the Sepoys in the Jullundur Doab. The question, then, is, Shall we wait for them to begin or shall we take the initiative? It is our bounden duty to take the latter course, and for you and me to urge it on Brigadier Johnstone. . . . Since I began this letter, yours of the 31st has come in and confirms all I have written. It is perfectly clear that the 36th Native Infantry are ready to break out at a moment's warning. You will receive my telegraphic message this day. I strongly urge on Brigadier Johnstone the expediency of disarming all the Poorbea Infantry, with the few exceptions of known loyalty which may exist. There can be no real difficulty in doing this. All that is required is a little management. . . . Please show this to General Johnstone. I will take the responsibility of disarming the Native Infantry.

There would have been little difficulty in carrying out the disarmament at once; for, as John Lawrence pointed out, Rothney's Sikhs happened to be passing at that very time through Jullundur on their way to Delhi, and would have been only too delighted to be employed in so congenial a task. But they were allowed to pass on. The disarmament was put off from hour to hour, on this plea or on that, till at last, on the night of the 7th, the rising which had been foreseen and might have been prevented at any moment during the last three weeks, took place. The Sepoys, with that curious inconsistency which marked so many of their doings throughout the Mutiny, and which shows the strong conflicting currents by which they were swayed, cut down some of their officers, while they carefully sheltered others. And, by midnight, the main body of three whole regiments was in full march for Phillour, for Loodiana, and for Delhi.

But, even now, it was not too late to act. For directly in their line of march rolled the broad and rapid Sutlej, and while they were picking up another regiment of mutineers, the long-wavering 3rd at Phillour, and were afterwards endeavouring to cross the river, the pursuing force might fall upon their rear, and if they failed to cut them to pieces, might, at all events, prevent their going on to Delhi as an organised force. So, at least, it seemed to the more daring and adventurous spirits in the European force at Jullundur, and so it must seem to everybody now. But it was three whole hours before General Johnstone decided on a pursuit at all. It was four more before he was ready to start, and, when he did start, there was no real pursuit, but only a series of aimless and indeterminate forward movements and of still more aimless and indeterminate halts. In fact, while the would-be pursuers were lingering at Jullundur the mutineers had already reached Phillour, had fraternised with the mal-content 3rd Regiment there, and were off again for the Sutlej. And while the pursuing force were making inquiries and, shameful to say, bivouacking at Phillour, the mutineers, by the help of a few crazy boats, were laboriously placing the river behind them, an operation which took not less than thirty hours to accomplish.

But they were not to pass entirely unopposed; for the qualities which were so conspicuously wanting in General Johnstone, were to be found in double measure in George Ricketts, a young civilian who was then Deputy Commissioner at Loodiana. Hearing from T. H. Thornton, another young civilian, of what was going on early in the day, Ricketts first took such precautions as he could for the safety of the station, and then carrying with him, under Lieutenant Williams, three companies of Sikhs who had just arrived, a couple of guns, and a contingent from the Raja of Nabha, he sallied forth, hoping that, if he could not prevent, he might, at least, retard the passage of the river by the Sepoys till the Jullundur force should fall upon their rear. He never doubted for a moment—nobody could have doubted—that such a force must be following close behind them. Taken between two fires, and with a broad river to cut them in halves, the destruction of the whole would have been a certainty. The road was difficult and the sand deep, and it

was not till ten at night that he reached the ghaut and found that all but four hundred of the enemy had already crossed. The horses of one of his two guns took fright, as it was being unlimbered, and galloped away with it to the enemy, and the Nabha contingent took to their heels at the first discharge. But the intrepid Ricketts worked the remaining gun himself, and with the help of the two Nabha officers, and the three companies of Sikhs, who also stood their ground, he managed, for nearly two hours, to maintain the contest against three regiments, and, at last, when his ammunition was expended, and when Williams had been shot down at his side, drew off his small remaining force in good order to the camp.

It was a fine feat of arms, and well might John Lawrence, who had sometimes been disposed to think that Ricketts was not sufficiently at home in the work of a civilian, exclaim, 'I am indeed proud of him.' 'I am highly pleased,' he wrote to Ricketts himself, shortly afterwards, 'with your energy and resolution. You did your best for the public service and maintained the honour of your cloth. . . . I do not trust myself to say what I think of the manner in which the pursuit was conducted by Johnstone.' And with good reason too, as the details of the miserable failure of General Johnstone were revealed to him day after day, might he pour forth to all his correspondents the vials of his wrath on the incapacity of the General, whom it was still proposed to send to the Peshawur Division.

General Johnstone (he writes to Cotton) has made a nice mess at Jullundur! I entreated him, fourteen days ago, to disarm his Native regiments; then, not to allow them to have charge of his treasure; then, to be, at least, ready to crush them if they mutinied. But it was of no use. He would have his own way, and you see the result. Had he followed the mutineers sharp they would have been cut up or drowned in the Sutlej. Now they are on their way, plundering as they go, to join the mutineers at Delhi. I trust they may be too late for the fair and catch a Tartar.

To Bartle Frere he writes in much the same strain :—

We are now pretty quiet. The people are wonderfully well behaved. Peshawur, our volcano, quiescent. . . . But our great misfortune is the escape of two Native Infantry corps and half a corps of Regular Cavalry



from Jullundur. They had the Sutlej in front of them and a body of European Infantry, Irregular Cavalry, and six guns behind them. The distance was twenty miles, and yet, by the anility of Brigadier Johnstone, the mutineers escaped and have gone to Delhi to add to the number of its defenders. I do assure you that some of our commanders are worse enemies than the mutineers themselves. I could sometimes almost believe that they have been given to us for our destruction.

In writing to Lord Canning, he naturally took the opportunity of clenching the question as to General Johnstone's transference to Peshawur.

General Johnstone would do nothing. He would not disarm the Sepoys, and he made no arrangements for punishing them. When they broke out, the European force was kept on the defensive; and when the mutineers bolted they were not followed for eight hours. Even then they would have been caught—for they were thirty hours getting across the Sutlej—but that the General halted half-way, at a distance of twenty-five miles! And yet this is the officer whom it is proposed to place over Brigadier S. Cotton in the Peshawur Division!

It is hardly necessary to add that it was not proposed to place him there any longer. The four mutinous regiments swept on from the Sutlej to Loodiana, raised into a short-lived disturbance its mixed and turbulent population of Cabul exiles and pensioners, of Kashmere shawl-makers and Goojur robbers, plundered or burned everything on which they could lay their hands, and then, when General Johnstone, who had been actually bivouacking within earshot of Ricketts's desperate cannonade, at length showed some signs of advancing, they passed quietly on again towards Delhi.

But there remained one city in the Punjab, which, commanding, as it did, the passage of the river from Lahore and the only good road whereby his province could still hold communication with the outer world, gave Sir John Lawrence the deepest anxiety. Would the authorities at Mooltan, a city infinitely more important than Jullundur, and only less important than Lahore and Peshawur themselves, follow the example set by the almost criminal incapacity of the officer in command at the one, or would they emulate the vigour and promptitude of both the civil and military authorities at the other? This was the pressing question, and the answer to it was plain, if the Chief Commissioner

could have his way. He had done everything in his power to save Jullundur. But the irresolution or obstinacy of Johnstone had been too strong for him. Would he be more successful here? Would Colonel Hicks, the chief military authority at Mooltan, be willing to distrust, to disarm, or to crush the malcontent Sepoys, and would he have the power, even if he had the will?

Sir John Lawrence thought not. He was convinced that there was only one man in the station who would be able to carry out so difficult and dangerous an operation, when the odds were so heavy against him. General Gowan had just written to the Chief Commissioner to announce his assumption of the chief military command in the Punjab, which had been vacated by General Reed. Like his predecessor, General Gowan seems to have had no very marked ability, or force of will himself. But he had the next best thing to it, a willingness to appreciate those qualities in another, and Sir John Lawrence replied by a telegram urging, in the strongest terms, an immediate disarmament of the troops at Mooltan, and begging, as a personal favour, that Crawford Chamberlain, who was in command of the 1st Irregular Cavalry, might be selected for the duty.

Besides Chamberlain's own regiment, which consisted of Hindustanis, whom, to the best of his belief, he could trust, there were two Native Infantry regiments, one of which was certainly, the other probably, tainted. The other auxiliaries were Punjabis, but with many Hindustanis amongst them. The only Europeans were a handful of forty artillerymen. But a Bombay regiment was expected to arrive in a few days from Scinde, and their presence would make the disarmament more feasible. Most men would have been disposed to wait. But Sir John Lawrence saw that time was everything, that the news of the Jullundur mutiny which had just reached him would be at Mooltan in a couple of days at the latest, and it would then be too late. His instructions were therefore peremptory. The risk was to be run at once, and, on the morning of June 9, just before the news from Jullundur reached the station, the two Infantry regiments were disarmed, without a drop of blood being shed, by the consummate skill and courage of the man whom Sir John had selected. The well-disposed citizens of Mooltan were able,

once again, to breathe freely, and the reinforcements, which Frere was already sending thither, were enabled, as they arrived, to move on, or to enable others to move on, to points where the danger was more urgent than even at Mooltan.

I have to thank you very heartily (wrote John Lawrence to Crawford Chamberlain) for the admirable manner in which you disarmed the 62nd and 69th Native Infantry. It was, I assure you, most delightful news hearing that it had been done. It was a most ticklish thing, considering that it had to be effected entirely by native troops. I shall not fail to bring it to the special notice of Government. It would have proved a great calamity had our communications with Bombay been intercepted. I beg you will thank your own and the two Punjab corps for their good conduct.

Disarmament in fact was now, in spite of the generous scruples of some of the military authorities, to be, as far as possible, the order of the day throughout the Punjab. Sir John Lawrence placed his views on the subject before General Gowan in his first letter thus :—

If Delhi fall at once, all will go well. But should much delay occur, or, still worse, should any misfortune happen, we must be prepared for squalls. I do not myself think that a single Poorbea regiment will remain faithful, and, in that case, I consider that we should disarm every one of them, where we have the means ; that is, where European regiments are present. By doing this, we shall be in a position to maintain ourselves and hold the country. At present, with the Regular Infantry in their sullen mind, we are like a strong swimmer struggling in a troublous sea with a man clinging round his neck and trying to drag him down.

If we wait until we are attacked we shackle ourselves, and enable our enemy to watch his own opportunity for attack. Such a policy must prove fatal.

I have written this minute account of the first few weeks of the Mutiny to little purpose, if I have failed to bring out the general impression of Sir John Lawrence's policy which has forced itself upon my own mind throughout. It was a policy almost Hannibalian, almost Napoleonic in its bold and vigorous advance, in its uncompromising front, in its wide sweep of view ; almost Fabian in its prudence, in its self-restraint, in its moral courage. 'Push on,' was the policy he urged on the lingerers at Umballa, and the malingeringers at Meerut. 'Disarm,' was his policy for Peshawur, for Jullun-

dur, for Mooltan, wherever, in fact, mutinous dispositions seemed likely to pass into mutinous acts. 'Punishment prompt and vigorous,' was his policy wherever it seemed necessary as an example. But he never ceased to urge on all within the sphere of his influence that discrimination, and precaution, and prevention could do more than any amount of vindictive measures.

How complete was the success of his disarmament policy at Peshawur and Mooltan, where he was warmly supported by the military authorities, General Cotton and General Gowan, I have already shown. That it would have been equally complete at Jullundur is clear had he been able to command as well as to advise; had Government, that is to say, given him the 'full powers' for which he asked, and so enabled him to get rid of the incompetent, and bring ability and vigour, at all hazards, to the front.

Nor was he less anxious to save the innocent, to put the well-disposed beyond the reach of temptation, to ease the position of those who, trustworthy themselves, were nevertheless obliged, for the time, to suffer with the guilty. In this spirit, he wrote to the Commander-in-Chief at Umballa advising him to summon all the men of the Irregular Cavalry who were on furlough at the time of the outbreak, and would therefore be liable to be carried away by it, to Meerut and enrol them there under competent officers. It was a step which if it had been taken at once, would, peradventure, have saved many well-meaning men from their own weakness, and have prevented one of Hodson's darkest deeds.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### THE PUNJAB AND DELHI.

JUNE-JULY 1857.

I HAVE now brought my narrative of the measures taken by Sir John Lawrence for the protection of the frontier of his province, for the strengthening of its forts and arsenals, for the disarmament and safe-keeping of its mutinous Sepoys, for the raising and the distribution of fresh troops, and for the carrying on of its ordinary administration, to the point of time which I had reached at the close of Chapter XVI., when such progress had been made towards the attaining of his more distant, but, certainly, not less important or less arduous object, as the appearance of the Field Force before Delhi might be considered to imply. Mutiny was now, no longer, to rear its head unmolested in the capital of the Moguls. Resistance was to be opposed to its further progress from Delhi as a centre. And if fresh bodies of mutinees were still able to flock, without let or hindrance into the city on five-sixths of its circumference, they would, at least, see, as they looked northwards from its ramparts, the British flag flying on the adjoining ridge, and would know that the cantonments behind that Ridge, from which our officers had been driven amidst scenes of rapine and murder a few weeks before, now contained the nucleus of a British force, who were resolved to hold them till Delhi fell, against all comers.

It may further be observed that it was on the very same day which witnessed the disarmament of the Sepoys at Mooltan, that the Delhi Field Force first received ocular demonstration, by the arrival of the Guides among them,

of what Sir John Lawrence had already done, was doing, and was going to do in furtherance of their great enterprise ; and that it was on the following day again, that the great Punishment Parade took place at Peshawur, which, as I have already shown, was changed by his remonstrances from a wholesale and indiscriminate slaughter into an act of judicial retribution. It would be difficult to say which of the three operations, all completed within twenty-four hours of each other, and at the most opposite corners of the sphere of his influence, the disarmament at Mooltan, the arrival of the Guides at Delhi, or the Punishment Parade at Peshawur, was most characteristic of the man and of his work. But, taken altogether, they form a sufficiently striking picture of that combination of mind with matter, of patience with promptitude, of wide views with the minutest grasp of details, of judicial calmness with irrepressible energy, which marked him throughout, which made him a head and shoulders taller than even the ablest and most energetic of his subordinates, and enabled him to guide the ship through the storm without, as it seems to me, giving a single order, or writing a single letter, or authorising a single course of action, which need shrink from the full light of day, or which, as we look back at it calmly at this distance of time, we can say ought, under all the circumstances of the case, to have remained unspoken, unwritten, or undone.

It was on the morning of June 9 that the Guides arrived before Delhi. They had accomplished a distance of five hundred and eighty miles in twenty-two days, and that too at the very hottest season of the year. There had been but three halts during the whole march, and those only by special order. It was a march hitherto unequalled in India, and in point of speed—an average of twenty-seven miles a day—it is, I believe, unequalled still. Unfortunately, they arrived just too late for the battle of Budli-ki-Serai. An ill-timed requisition by Sir Theophilus Metcalfe, who had escaped with his bare life from Delhi, had called them aside from the nobler object which lay in front, to the less congenial work of burning some villages which lay along their line of march. But on the morning following the battle, before any siege operations had begun, they came in, travel-stained, but not travel-worn, light of heart and light of step, proud of

their mission, of their leader, and of their march, the vanguard of the long succession of reinforcements which Sir John Lawrence was to pour down on Delhi, and were welcomed, as well they might be, with ringing cheers by the small force of which they were henceforward to form so conspicuous a part. Nor had they been in camp more than a few hours when they crossed swords with the enemy's cavalry and drove them back in disorder right up to the city walls. They were unfortunate in one thing only, that Quentin Battye, the second in command, a young officer of rare promise and of conspicuous courage, fell mortally wounded in the charge.

The gallant Guides—those, at least, of them who were married—had felt one cause of anxiety during the early part of their march, which Sir John Lawrence himself had managed to remove. They had been obliged to leave their wives and children behind them at Murdan; and these—as many an anxious husband or father thought—might be exposed to injury or insult at the hands of the disaffected Sepoys, or the wild borderers, who were their nearest neighbours. The corps was ordered to halt at Rawul Pindi, that the Chief Commissioner might bid them God-speed, and that their leader, Henry Daly, might hold counsel with him, with Neville Chamberlain, and with Herbert Edwardes, who had, just then, gathered there. Daly mentioned the anxieties of his men to John Lawrence, who at once promised to call their wives and families down to Rawul Pindi, and look after them there himself! And a letter of his to Daly, which must have caught up the regiment at Umballa or thereabouts, will show that he was as good as his word. 'I hope this will find you all safe, and that you will not be too late for the fight at Delhi. I send you a list of the ladies of your regiment who have arrived at this place from Murdan. They are all safe, under my protection, in my compound. I will give them the sums noted out of their husbands' pay, or until I hear from you. If the husbands purpose any alteration, let me know the specific sums which each is to receive monthly.'

There are, as it seems to me, few more picturesque or characteristic incidents in Sir John Lawrence's life than this. The Chief Commissioner 'having the care,' like the Apostle of old, 'of all the churches,' overworked and ill in health, and yet playing the part of a humble deacon in the early church,

and himself seeing that 'the widows,' aye, and the wives and children, were not neglected in 'the daily ministration;' the 'ladies of the regiment,' belonging to, perhaps, a dozen different tribes, and speaking half-a-dozen different dialects, but all safe under his eye, all having the run of his compound, and receiving each, from his own hand, month by month, the exact sums which their more thrifty, or their more liberally disposed husbands before Delhi might be willing to entrust to them! There was, of course, a humorous side to the scene, which Sir John Lawrence himself would be the first to appreciate. But if genius is 'an infinite capacity for taking pains,' here, certainly, was something of genius; and if true religion consists 'in visiting the fatherless and the widows in their affliction,' here was more than something of true religion.

The Movable Column, the command of which had been given, as I have related, to Neville Chamberlain, had, by this time, passed on from Rawul Pindi to Jhelum and Wuz-eerabad, and was nearing Lahore. Chamberlain had been invested by General Anson, for the purposes of his command, with the rank of Brigadier-General. Otherwise, all his movements would have been hampered, and the object for which the column had been formed would have been defeated. He would have been unable to enter any military station without the leave of the Brigadier commanding it, and when he had done so, he would have been subject to his authority. The Column reached Lahore on June 4, and its presence was taken advantage of to put the finishing touch to the bold measure of disarmament which had been carried out on May 13. The 8th Light Cavalry Regiment had been disarmed, but had not, as yet, been dismounted. They might, therefore, still be formidable, and there were some indications that they were disposed to be so. By skilful arrangement they were now deprived of their horses, without bloodshed, though not without disorder. A few days afterwards, the Jullundur rising took place, and Chamberlain hurried off with his Column to Umritsur, which he reached in two forced marches; in time, that is, to anticipate any rising on the part of its excitable inhabitants, and to make Govindghur secure against attack.

But now the news of the death of Colonel Chester, Adju-



tant-General of the army before Delhi, reached Sir John Lawrence. He knew well how valuable Chamberlain's services were to him in the Punjab. But he felt that they would be more valuable still at Delhi. And, with his usual self-abnegation, he telegraphed to Reed, offering to allow either Chamberlain or Nicholson to fill the vacant place, and stipulating only that, if Chamberlain were taken, Nicholson, despite all consideration of seniority and age—for he was only a regimental captain—should succeed, *per saltum*, to the command of the Column, with the rank of Brigadier-General. It was no time for considerations of military etiquette or precedence. Tools must go, as in times of revolution and great emergency they seldom fail to go, to him who can best handle them. And thus, though it is not strictly accurate to say, as has been said in so many books on the Mutiny, and in so many obituary notices of Lord Lawrence, that he himself, by his own authority, promoted Captain Nicholson to the rank of Brigadier-General, 'an appointment which he had no more legal right to make than to make him Archbishop of Canterbury;' yet it is strictly true to say that the bold idea originated with him; that it was registered by General Reed, as indeed were nearly all Sir John Lawrence's wishes and ideas by the military authorities; and that the appointment was, with few exceptions, cordially acquiesced in by the officers who found themselves superseded. Few more striking proofs of the commanding personal qualities, and of the confidence which Sir John Lawrence inspired, can be found than this. 'John Nicholson is worthy, and Sir John Lawrence has ordered it,' and there the matter ended. And it has been remarked in one of the ablest and most appreciative obituary notices of John Lawrence, from which the sentence I have just quoted comes,\* that to such an extent did soldiers believe in him, that 'it was often said that he was the single civilian in the empire who could have taken command of an army without the resignation of any officer in it!'

Neville Chamberlain reached Delhi on June 24. His arrival had been anxiously looked for, and was warmly welcomed by everyone in the camp from Sir Henry Barnard to the private soldier. 'Everything will go right,' men said,

\* *Spectator*, July 5, 1879.

'when Chamberlain comes ;' while cooler heads, men who did not think that the walls of Delhi would fall down, like the walls of Jericho, even at the arrival of Neville Chamberlain, said that his presence there would be worth a thousand men. Nor did he come alone. With him was Alexander Taylor, of the Bengal Engineers, who had been in charge, under Robert Napier, for many years past, of one of the greatest works of the English in India, the prolongation of the Grand Trunk Road, and had succeeded in carrying it almost from Lahore to Peshawur, a distance of 256 miles. Taylor had served through both Sikh wars ; had been with Robert Napier at the siege of Mooltan ; and had joined Gilbert in his wild ride after the Afghans from Gujerat to the mouth of the Khyber. On the annexation of the Punjab, he had settled down to the more monotonous but not less important work of road-making, and had, ever since then, been working away at it under the high pressure which was characteristic of the Punjab Administration.

One incident connected with the 'turbulent and imperious' Nicholson, and told me by Taylor himself, may, in view of the way in which the two men were henceforward to be thrown together in a common cause, find a place here ; the more so, as the very existence of the sect of worshippers to whom it relates has sometimes been called in question. 'One day,' said Sir Alexander Taylor, 'while I was sitting in my small bungalow at Hussan Abdul, half-way between Rawul Pindi and Attock, some twenty helmeted men, very quaintly dressed, filed in one after another, and after a courteous salute, squatted down in a row opposite to me without speaking a word. I was much taken aback at this strange apparition. I looked at them and they at me, till, at last, one of them gave utterance to their thoughts and objects. "We are Nikkul Seyn's Fakirs ; you are a white Sahib ; and we are come to pay our respects to you as one of Nikkul Seyn's race." ' Taylor had never even heard of the existence of this strange sect before. After a little conversation, he dismissed them ; and they passed on southward in the direction of Dera Ismael Khan, where the object of their adoration was then to be found. He gave them, as he always did, a good flogging for their pains. But, as in the case of Paul and Barnabas at Lystra, the more he protested and the

more he punished them, the more, a great deal, they worshipped him !

On passing through Rawul Pindi to take command of the Column, Nicholson had had much conversation with his chief upon a matter which, as I shall show hereafter, was the subject of considerable difference of opinion between the ruler of the Punjab and the most restive of his subordinate officers. He left it on the 17th, and, on the following day, he wrote from Jhelum as follows :—

I forgot before starting to say one or two things I had omitted saying. One was to thank you for my appointment. I know you recommended it on *public* grounds, but I do not feel the less obliged to you. Another was to tell you that I have dismissed old grievances (whether real or imaginary) from my mind, and, as far as I am concerned, bygones are bygones. In return, I would ask you not to judge me over-hastily or hardly.

Meanwhile it was clear that John Lawrence was stripping his province, little by little, of his most dependable troops and of the officers whom he knew best, men who would be a tower of strength to him, could they be near at hand, if an uprising should occur in the Punjab. Rothney and Coke, Chamberlain and Taylor, had already gone to Delhi, and Nicholson, at the head of his Column, was shifting about with all the speed and erratic movements of a meteor, anywhere between Peshawur, his former field of duty, and Umballa.

And now the question arose, who was to fill the gap which Nicholson had left at Peshawur ? No one, indeed, could hope to become, what he had been, alike 'the terror and the idol' of the wild tribes of the frontier, and there was only one man in the whole of the Punjab who had had any considerable experience of the Peshawur work and people. This was Hugh James, who, since Temple had gone on furlough, had been 'acting' as John Lawrence's Secretary, had been at his elbow ever since the Mutiny broke out, and so had become familiar with all his ways and plans. He, of course, could not be spared. But, in spite of the advice of Herbert Edwardes, who would gain most by his presence, he was spared. 'You are to go back to Peshawur,' said his chief, 'and I will get on with anybody.'

The 'anybody' soon appeared in the person of Arthur

Brandreth, a man of much vigour and ability, who has since filled, for many years, the post in which John Lawrence first rose to eminence, the Commissionership of the Trans-Sutlej States, and who became, from that day forward, one of his most intimate friends. Still he was not endowed by nature with some of the gifts which would seem to be most essential for a Private Secretary at a time of such overwhelming work and anxiety. 'He is an Excellent Secretary,' said his chief, with a sardonic smile, 'and I would gladly have him as a son-in-law, but I can neither hear a word that he speaks, nor read a line that he writes!' And Arthur Brandreth, in his turn, has given, partly in a letter to the 'Times,' written soon after Lord Lawrence's death, and partly in conversations with myself, a vigorous and appreciative description of his chief's work and character.

My first introduction to Lord Lawrence was in March 1853. I was sent for by him. I found him in a room with four or five *munshis* hard at work. Just then a box with official papers came in. The key was not to be found. A very slight search was made, when John Lawrence said abruptly, 'Break it open, break it open.' This was done, a glance taken at the contents, and then, and not till then, he turned to me and had a friendly talk. When I came to Rawul Pindi in June 1857, to take the post of 'acting' Secretary in place of James, he said to me, 'Well, Brandreth, you are come to be my Secretary, are you? you must be reticent, remember, all Secretaries must be. But you need not be so reticent as James, for he won't tell even me!'

Brandreth in a letter to the 'Times' speaks, from his personal knowledge, of a stroke of policy, which neither the letters of Sir John Lawrence to his friends, nor my conversations with them, would have brought out so clearly. I have, therefore, forbore to refer to it till I should be able to quote his own words:—

Sir John Lawrence then took a step which has been little understood, but which really saved Upper India. He sent for old Nihal Sing Chachi, Sir F. Currie's and his own Sikh aide-de-camp, and with him, made out lists of all the Sikh chiefs who had suffered for the rebellion of 1848, and wrote at once to each, before they understood the news, urging them to retrieve their character and come down at once with their retainers, naming the number to be brought by each. As they came in, he organised and sent them off to Delhi. I well recollect the pains he took personally to inspect each retainer or recruit, and see how far he was fit

for service, and how glad he was to secure any specimen of the old Sikh Cavalry. He then took great pains, after long discussions with Macpherson, to select an officer for them, who would have an influence over them, and sent them on to Delhi. It was fortunate that his foresight led him to take such a step. We soon found that inquiries were being made in most of the dangerous parts of the country for leaders to take advantage of this opportunity. But none could be found. They were at Delhi, and several intercepted letters from there showed that many of the chiefs felt the mistake they had made, although they wrote that, now they were at Delhi, nothing remained but to fight for the English.

Nihal Sing Chachi was a remarkable man from every point of view. Sir John Lawrence thought him one of the most remarkable natives with whom he had ever come in contact ; and, as such, he deserves more than a mere passing mention here. He was brave as a lion, very intelligent, and—a much rarer quality among the natives of India, men accustomed for ages to foreign conquests and foreign oppression—honest as the day. He was, moreover, warmly attached to the English rule, and he showed his affection,—not, as do too many of our friends among the natives, and as they are too often encouraged to do,—by echoing all that their rulers say and by a servile compliance with their wishes, but rather by speaking his mind freely, whether his views were likely to be palatable or not. Such a man was sure to win the confidence of Sir John Lawrence, and in a crisis like that of the Mutiny, his advice on many subjects would be worth more than that of the ablest English officers. For, being a native, he would be able to penetrate behind that impenetrable veil which, unfortunately, still separates the vast majority of our countrymen from those whom they rule. He had been one of the ‘illustrious garrison’ at Jellalabad, and it had been remarked of him that he had got to know the character of each of its defenders as well as they could know it themselves! He had long been a friend of Edward Thornton, in whose Division he lived, and John Lawrence, who was always ready to listen to what anyone who had special sources of information had to say, and was always able, by his strong good sense, to separate the grain from the chaff, was glad to avail himself of his unique acquaintance with the under-currents of native feeling in the Punjab.

In the earlier days of the Mutiny, Sir John Lawrence, as I have shown, had been disposed, with that prudence which never forsook him, to think twice before he committed himself to the dangerous and two-edged measure of arming the old Sikhs who had fought against us so few years previously. 'You had better employ them,' said Nihal Sing, 'or they may go against you.' The advice was not altogether reassuring. It showed that the weapon was two-edged still. But John Lawrence chose what appeared to him, on reflection, to be the lesser danger, and so committed the old Sikhs to our side before the greater came. 'Why does not the Chief Commissioner employ Hodson?' said the same shrewd observer of human nature, on one occasion to Thornton. 'He ought to employ Hodson. Hodson would do good work at Delhi.' 'No doubt he would,' said Thornton. 'But he is one of the only three Englishmen in India that I have known who cannot be trusted.' Nihal Sing was silent for a moment, as though the idea was new to him, and then said, 'I have known only three natives who *could* be trusted.'

John Lawrence knew Hodson, much better than even Nihal Sing, and knowing the man, his weakness and his strength, and feeling that if there was much of the born leader, there was also much of the freebooter in his composition, was, as we have seen, not willing to employ him in the Punjab again. But when he heard that General Anson had already given him work in which he had few peers, he allowed Montgomery to raise some men for him at Lahore and to send them down to Delhi, where they formed the nucleus of the renowned 'Hodson's Horse.'

And how were things going on at Delhi meanwhile? Some people, and those not usually of the most sanguine temperament, had believed that to see Delhi would be to walk into it; that the mutineers would take to flight when we appeared, or if not, that they would offer only a feeble resistance, and that the population would at once declare itself in our favour. It is likely enough that such would have been the result had General Hewitt possessed ordinary sagacity or vigour, and, following up the flying troopers on the night of May 10, appeared at Delhi before the palace walls were stained with innocent blood, and before the feeble descendant of the

Moguls had been mobbed or muddled into the belief that he might yet restore the Mogul empire. It is possible, again, that such might have been the result had the move upon Delhi taken place—as John Lawrence had endeavoured to ensure—a fortnight sooner than it did. Possible, but hardly probable. And just as there were many people in England who complained because the battle of the Alma had not been followed up by a rush upon Sebastopol, even so there were many in India who regarded the battle of Budli-ki-Serai as half a defeat, because it was not crowned by the immediate capture of Delhi. Indeed, so general was the belief that Delhi must fall as soon as our troops appeared before it, that, about the middle of June, it was believed far and wide that it had actually fallen. Even Lord and Lady Canning believed it for some twenty-four hours. But once established upon the Ridge, General Barnard saw, at a glance, that the operations of a regular siege were out of the question. Was, then, an assault or a surprise possible? The younger and more adventurous spirits in the camp thought that it was. By permission of the General, though hardly with his approval, the details of such an assault were arranged by five young officers—Hodson, Wilberforce, Greathed, Chesney, and Maunsell. The powder bags for blowing in the gates had already been provided; the assaulting columns were drawn up, ready and eager for the start, when a few words spoken by Brigadier Graves to General Barnard, words such as the Greeks or Romans would have put down to a direct interposition of heaven, a *φῆμη*, or a *vox opportune emissa*, caused the whole project to be abandoned for the present. A few days later it was mooted again at a Council of War. The political arguments advanced by Hervey Greathed and the young Engineers in favour of an immediate attempt, seemed to be as unanswerable as the military arguments advanced by Archdale Wilson, and Reed, and Barnard were unanswerable against it. This being the case, the more prudent, or, as some thought them, the more timid, counsels carried the day. And, judging by the event and by the deliberate opinion of men who, like Sir Neville Chamberlain or Sir Henry Norman, went through the whole siege, it was well that they did so.

Meanwhile there was fighting enough for the most ardent

spirits in the English camp. Hardly a day passed in which our small force was not compelled to face desperate attacks delivered at one point or another, in the front or in the rear of our position, by vastly superior bodies of the foe, whose religious and national fanaticism had been stimulated to the utmost by copious draughts of bhang. The deeds of personal and collective prowess displayed in repelling these attacks by men like Reid with his Ghoorkas, and Daly with his Guides ; by Tombs and Brind, Renny and Fagan of the Artillery ; by Hope Grant, Watson and Probyn of the Cavalry ; by Showers, Seaton, and Coke of the Infantry ; by Hodson everywhen and everywhere, afford a tempting field for minute description and glowing eulogy. But they imply such a vast amount of detail, and they have been described already in so many histories of the Mutiny, that I am compelled to regard them as beyond my limits. Suffice it to say that the attacks of the enemy were always beaten off with heavy loss.

Day after day, news reached the camp that fresh bands of mutineers, stained with blood—the blood of their officers, and, sometimes also, of their wives and children,—were arriving to swell the garrison of the city, and were more than filling the gaps which we had made in their ranks. One day, early in the siege, it was the 60th Native Infantry, who ought to have been disarmed by Anson at Umballa and were now flocking into Delhi from Rohtuck, four hundred strong, leaving their officers to take refuge, as an equivalent, with us. Another day, June 18, it was the Nusserabad Brigade, consisting of two regiments and six guns. A third day, it was four whole regiments from Jullundur and Phillour, few of whom, if the General in command had done his duty when the rising took place, would have lived to tell the tale. Then again, it was the Bareilly or Rohilcund Brigade, consisting of some four thousand men of all arms, which was believed to be approaching, or the still more formidable Gwalior Contingent, which, while it concentrated its main body for the siege of Agra, would, it was feared, be able also to send a detachment down to Delhi. The arrival of each fresh batch of mutineers was signalled by an attack delivered, next day, with ever greater zest on our ever-dwindling numbers ; and if our casualties each day were few, each one



of them was severely felt. One day, it was Quentin Battye at the head of the Guides who fell, while every officer but one in the corps was wounded. Another day, the lot fell on Colonel Yule, of the 9th Lancers, a member of an illustrious brotherhood; while Arthur Becher, the Quartermaster-General of the force, and Daly, the dashing head of the Guides, were severely wounded. A third day, it was Neville Chamberlain who was laid low by a wound which was to incapacitate him from active service during the remainder of the siege. Now, it was the forty-second anniversary of Waterloo (June 18), which was to put to the test the mettle of those whose fathers had been conquerors there; and now, again, it was the centenary of Plassy (June 23), which, as priests and prophets, omens and dreams had agreed in foretelling, was to witness our final overthrow. Why should not the Empire which had been founded in a day perish also in a day?

Unfortunately, such few precautions as might have been taken to minimise the demoralising influence of this desultory and protracted warfare were, for some cause or other, not adopted by the military authorities. There was no regular system of reliefs, and consequently, when the alarm sounded, which it sometimes did two or three times over in a single night, every man in the force had to be on the alert. The alarm was often a false one. But this did not make it less demoralising or less destructive. There was no stint, no stay. No one in camp could count on even a few hours of unbroken rest. Barnard, it must be remembered in justice to him, was new to the country and found himself suddenly thrust into a position which might have puzzled and perplexed the most experienced and energetic of the Company's officers. Assuredly it was from no want of will or effort on his part that everything which might have been done to lessen the discomforts and the miseries of the men was not done. He was ever unsparing of himself. He was to be seen at all hours of the night and day, in all parts of the camp, encouraging, sympathising, commending.\* His great fault, and it was, perhaps, inevitable that it should be brought into prominence under the unprecedented circum-

\* See *Narrative of Campaign of the Delhi Army*, by Major H. Norman, p. 22.

stances in which he was placed, was a want of self-reliance. He was swayed this way and that by his advisers.

He had long shown signs of breaking down under his extreme anxiety, and now it was whispered that sleep was beginning to fail him.\* It was the beginning of the end. The greatest military commanders, Hannibal, Alexander, Cæsar, Wellington, Napoleon, have all been famous for the power of sleeping whenever they wished to do so. Without that power, humiliating as it may seem to confess it, they could not have been such great commanders. I have already remarked that Sir John Lawrence himself was probably saved from breaking down altogether in the early days of the Mutiny by the way in which he could drop asleep directly his work was over, could be aroused to send forth an all-important telegram, and then drop off again in sweet forgetfulness. But 'nature's kind nurse' came not now to Barnard. He had hoped, indeed, for great relief from the presence of Neville Chamberlain, and then again from that of Baird Smith, the new Chief Engineer, a man of the highest ability and energy, who reached the camp on July 3, anxious at once to begin regular siege operations. But Baird Smith found that nothing was ready. There was a scarcity of tools, and a scarcity of workmen. There were no sand-bags and few heavy guns. Worse than all, there was not shot and shell enough for a single day's bombardment. So he was obliged to fall back on what Chamberlain and Reed, Barnard, and he himself all called 'a gamester's throw,' or 'the hazard of a die,' the project of an assault. But the 'throw' was not to be thrown, nor the first sod of the regular siege works to be upturned by order of the General in command. The hand of death was already upon Barnard, and thus two Commanders of the Delhi field force passed from the scene before a single step had been taken towards the capture of the place.

Such was the general course of events at Delhi during the month of June and such the general outlook of the siege. Why was it not given up as hopeless, and how was it that the constant drain upon our numbers and our resources did not cause even the bolder spirits in our camp to advocate a withdrawal from so bootless an enterprise?

There was one reason and only one. Sir John Lawrence

\* Kaye, vol. ii. p. 558.

had been the prime instigator of the advance on Delhi ; and everybody in the camp knew well that he was not the man to let the enterprise fall through for want of any help that he could give. Force of circumstances and force of character combined had placed him in a position as regards the whole North-West of India which was absolutely unique. What mattered it that Lord Canning and that Mr. Colvin were cut off from all communication with Delhi by a broad belt of mutiny ? What mattered it to the army that one Commander-in-Chief after another was carried off by death, or went away, apparently death-stricken, to the hills, if John Lawrence, who was more to them than the Commander-in-Chief, more even than the Governor-General, still remained ? There he was at Rawul Pindi, hearing everything, weighing everything, deciding everything, directing everything ; it might almost be said,—so admirable were his means of information, his Intelligence Department throughout his province,—seeing everything. His was a mind that was able to look before as well as after, after as well as before. He it was who held in his hand the tangled threads of every military movement and every political combination, from Delhi to Peshawur, and from Peshawur again to Mooltan, or,—thanks to the warm co-operation of Bartle Frere,—even to Kurrachi. His was the name that was on everybody's lips ; his the figure that filled the background, at least, of everybody's thoughts.

While John Lawrence was doing all that he could to sustain the army before Delhi, dangers were thickening at his own doors. At each of the three military stations, of Sealkote, Jhelum, and Rawul Pindi, mutiny was smouldering, and might at any time burst into a flame. At each of them there was a regiment or more of Hindustanis, many of whom were wavering even then, and all of them would, beyond doubt, turn against us in the event of a reverse before Delhi, or even of any prolonged inaction there. At Sealkote and Jhelum there was not a single European soldier of the line. At Rawul Pindi there were only 500, together with six guns and a few Artillerymen, and what were they amongst so many ?

Sealkote had been originally selected as the site of a cantonment by Sir Charles Napier, that it might act as a check

on Golab Sing. That danger had never hitherto been a real one. But it might become real now, when the sword of even the weak and wily Dogra Rajpoot, if it were thrown into the evenly balanced scale, might weigh it down against us. Jhelum and Rawul Pindi were both situated on the Grand Trunk Road between Lahore and Peshawur, and it was obvious that a successful rising at either of them would cut the Punjab in two halves, and would leave Huzara and Peshawur, as John Lawrence was fond of expressing it, 'in the air.' Would it be possible to put off the evil day till Delhi should fall, when the danger, it might be hoped, would disappear of itself? Or would it be better to attempt to disarm the troops at one or other of the three places, at the risk of causing a general rising all along the line?

Such was the question which pressed for decision. Sir John Lawrence determined first to try delay, and advised the military authorities at each of the three stations to weed out their worst characters, to promise the 'Order of Merit' to anyone who should do us conspicuous service, and to encourage their men to 'volunteer' for active service against the mutineers. This last process would not, of course, induce our officers to relax a single precaution against treachery. But it might serve to employ and amuse the men, to confirm the wavering and to discourage the malcontents. Finding that the regiment at Rawul Pindi had thus 'volunteered,' he made them a speech which seems to have roused real enthusiasm among them, and as he went away he 'could hear them cheering for a long distance as they returned to their lines.'

But Delhi did not fall, and gave no sign of doing so. 'Symptoms of uneasiness,' to adopt the euphemism common at the time, began to show themselves among the Sepoys at these unprotected stations, and were soon followed by those of active disaffection. The danger was at its greatest at Jhelum, and Sir John Lawrence determined to lessen it there, in the only way in which he could do so, by increasing that at his own doors. He brought two of the disaffected companies to Rawul Pindi from Jhelum, and supplied their place with a strong body of Military Police, and of horse and foot levies which were above suspicion. The danger being thus equalised, it was time, he thought, to attempt the

simultaneous disarmament at both places. Half of his small number of guns and more than half of his small body of Europeans he sent off to Jhelum, and, with the small remainder, he prepared to disarm the regiment at Rawul Pindi.

It was the 7th of July. The plan was carefully matured with the military authorities, but just as he was about to address the men, they became alarmed, broke away, got into their lines, and armed themselves. 'But by good management and the influence of the officers of the 58th, who behaved admirably, nearly all the men gave up their arms. Some forty ran off, but were pursued and killed or taken.' Such was the plain, unvarnished account given by Sir John Lawrence to Lord Canning. It was never his way to speak boastfully of what he had done himself, and I cannot find in any of his letters to his friends describing the events of the day, aught which implies that it was very nearly being his last day, that he had been in any exceptional danger, or had put forth any exceptional effort.

How much Sir John Lawrence himself rejoiced at the saving of human life, which was the result of his efforts, may be gathered from a letter he wrote a few days afterwards to General Sydney Cotton, who was likely to have many similar opportunities.

I must say that I was very glad we did not fire on the 58th. Our forbearance had a good effect. If anything can convince the Sepoys that we are sincerely desirous to save them, it would be by such conduct. In talking to them, that day, I asked them why they had bolted. They replied, 'Because you were going to fire the guns on us.' I replied, 'If such were our intention, why did we not fire?' The fact that we did not do so, when you ran, ought to convince you of this.' They remarked, 'But why take away our arms? We had committed no fault.' I added, 'True, you had not; but your relations and friends and countrymen had. We only do it to protect ourselves. The arms are not yours, they belong to Government, to give or to take away.' The officers behaved exceedingly well, and the corps, so far as I can judge, is a good one. But, just now, we can trust none of them. Even our own Punjabis in some cases get contaminated.

The Jhelum business did not end so fortunately, but the Chief Commissioner was not to blame for it. The arrangements for the disarmament had been made with at least equal care. A larger force than that which remained at

Rawul Pindi, some 500 men in all, had been detached for the duty, and John Lawrence himself had strongly advised—he could not do more—the officer in command, that in case the Sepoys should take refuge in their lines, our attack should be delivered, not in the front, where the lines were more defensible, but in the rear, where they were quite unprotected. The 14th Native Regiment at Jhelum had long borne a bad name, and seeing, early on the morning of the 7th, the Rawul Pindi force approaching, they loaded and rushed for their lines. Our attack was delivered in front, and was repulsed with heavy loss. A running and a desperate fight was maintained throughout the day, and when night fell, the rebels had, with difficulty, been driven to an adjoining village, and we had lost a gun, 100 horses, and 150 men. The fighting seemed likely to be renewed on the following day. But, during the night, the Sepoys lost heart and fled, and in one way or another, within a week or two, almost all of them fell into our hands.

The telegraph had carried, hour by hour, to Sir John Lawrence, who was at Rawul Pindi, full details of the progress of the fight. He had been, as we have seen, in sufficient peril himself on the morning of that day. But he called a council of officers at his house, and with a confidence in himself and in the future which must have been contagious, proposed to send off to Jhelum nearly half of all the force that remained to him! They were off in a few hours under orders to do a forced march of thirty miles on that, and of forty on the following night; so that in thirty-six hours at latest the disaster would be retrieved. ‘I well remember,’ says Brandreth, ‘our finding the supply of powder-cases insufficient, and Sir John at once decided to send off *all* with the reinforcements, leaving us dependent on what Colonel Cox could make up during the night.’

It was a short-lived success for the mutineers. But it had lasted long enough to give the signal for the rising at Sealkote, which had been so long feared, and under circumstances of unusual difficulty, had been so long postponed.

There were at Sealkote, under Brigadier Brind, about 700 armed Sepoys and 250 mounted troopers. The European force which had been stationed in that large cantonment at the outbreak of the Mutiny had after full deliberation,

and with a full sense of his responsibility, been withdrawn from it by Sir John Lawrence to form a part of the Movable Column. Few more difficult questions had come before him. The local authorities, naturally enough, took a local view, and were for standing fast where they were. But the Chief Commissioner, seeing that there were not enough Europeans to hold all the Stations, and, at the same time, to give the maximum of efficiency to the Movable Column, determined to run the lesser risk, and to withdraw the Europeans from a position which no one but Sir Charles Napier had ever thought to be a place of prime importance, and which Sir John Lawrence himself was convinced was safe, even now, from all attack by Golab Sing. At the same time, he advised Brigadier Brind, if he doubted the fidelity of his native troops, to disarm them before the Europeans left. Afterwards, it would be too late. They had, hitherto, shown no open sign of discontent, and Brind, generously declining to secure his own safety and that of his officers at the expense of his men, for six weeks from that time, by dint of extraordinary tact and courage, managed to keep them straight. He knew that he was sitting on a powder magazine, but was bound to do so with a smiling face.

At last the spark was applied by the momentary success of the mutineers at Jhelum. The infantry connived at the escape of their officers. But the troopers, who were more bloodthirstily inclined, murdered every European on whom they could lay hands, Brind himself, a missionary with his family, and two much respected doctors among the number. The work of plunder followed. All the houses in the Station were sacked, the cutcherries destroyed, the jail broken open, the prisoners set free, and worse than all, some of the officers of the Punjab Military Police—the one instance in the whole of the Mutiny in which they did so—played us false. Even the domestic servants, whose devotion and fidelity were generally proverbial, turned upon their masters.

But, even here, there were many redeeming points in the conduct of the mutineers. They appear to have regarded their officers, especially Colonel Farquharson and Captain Caulfield of the 46th, with genuine affection. They kept them safely under guard the whole day and then allowed them to escape. On parting with them several of the men

shed tears, touched their feet—the most respectful mode of native salutation—and deplored the separation. On being urged not to join in the Mutiny, they said they could not avoid it, they must needs fight for the general cause. So confident did they feel of success, that they offered to secure Colonel Farquharson 2,000 rupees a month and a residence in the Hills if he would consent to make common cause with them, and retain his command ! This was an incident which touched Sir John Lawrence deeply, and to which he was fond of recurring when he heard wholesale denunciations of the Sepoys, and demands for more and more wholesale executions.

The work of plunder over, the mutineers with one old gun which belonged to the Station, marched off in good order for Delhi. And Delhi they would probably have reached, had not John Nicholson with his Column lain just so far off from their route as to make it seem impossible that he could intercept them. By his famous flank march, involving as it did miracles of speed and endurance, he managed to throw himself across their route, and, by the curious irony of destiny, with the very European force which, if it had been detained at Sealkote, might have overawed them there !

But of this more presently. And meanwhile we must try to follow the first acts of the newly-fledged Brigadier-General with especial reference to the relations which, true to his erratic and masterful self, he still bore to the subject of this biography. I have said that strange things might be expected when Nicholson found himself, for the first time, at the head of an army in the field, and not many days passed before he showed that, in spite of his good resolutions, he would be true to himself, alike in his impetuous gallantry and in his sublime disregard of all authority. He had told Sir John Lawrence in a letter which I have already quoted that, so far as he was concerned, 'by-gones should be by-gones ;' and it was well that he had done so, for there were enough grounds of complaint and misunderstanding ahead, to satisfy the most insatiable appetite for that species of excitement.

'I was glad,' writes John Lawrence, 'to receive your last note, and to find that you had given up all old matters. I assure you that I endeavour in all public affairs to be guided



by a sense of my duty. Where I can conciliate those working with me, it is my object to do so. When I can not, I try to offend them as little as possible.'

Already, on leaving Rawul Pindi, Nicholson had taken a step which might have involved a breach with any man who was less considerate than his chief. He had pressed Sir John Lawrence, in conversation, to increase the size of his Column by transferring to it the one European regiment which kept the Sepoys of that place and of Jhelum in check, and was ultimately to be used in disarming them both. Sir John had pointed out in reply that the Column was amply large enough for what it had to do in the Punjab, and that to abandon Rawul Pindi would be to sever the line of communication between Lahore and Peshawur, and to ensure disorganisation in the surrounding districts. Nothing should induce him to take so desperate a step, till a still more desperate state of things at Delhi should compel him to send his last man thither.

Nicholson left Rawul Pindi, and straightway wrote to General Gowan advising him to withdraw the European troops, whether Sir John Lawrence consented or not! With characteristic frankness he told his chief what he had done, and added what it was hardly necessary to add, that he had done it only from a sense of duty. With equally characteristic magnanimity and forbearance, Sir John replied, 'I am sorry that I cannot agree with you in your views about Rawul Pindi. So long as you have a European regiment with the Movable force, I do not think that the 500 European Infantry of H.M.'s 24th can well be better disposed of than at this spot. But I quite understand and admit the grounds on which you wrote to the General.'

Nicholson joined the Column at Jullundur on June 21, and his first act gave sufficient proof that a master spirit was in the field. To the mixed amazement and delight of those who composed the Column he started with it, two days later, as if he was going straight to Delhi. But he had other purposes in view. And by a series of admirable arrangements, every one of which was carried out exactly as it ought to be, he succeeded with 800 Europeans in disarming two whole regiments, the 33rd and 35th, one of which formed part of his Column already, and which, had he taken it to Delhi, would

have joined the mutineers at once; the other, an equally suspicious regiment, which had been ordered to join him from Hoshiarpore on his line of march. Not a shot was fired, nor a drop of blood shed. Sir John Lawrence was delighted with the act itself, and with the manner in which it had been carried out. But hearing from Nicholson none of the particulars, he ventured in the letter which I have already quoted to ask that he should be kept informed of what was done and the grounds for doing it. 'I have no doubt that it is all right, and that it is on the safe side, but I wish to hear of what is done, and the grounds of it. A few words will suffice. It looks foolish, my being in charge of the Punjab and telling Government that this and that has been done, and not being able to add a line as to the reason.'

The explanation came in time, and his chief at once replied, July 7 :—'I am perfectly satisfied with your note of the 5th. Pray don't think I want to bother you. I cannot and do not expect that, after knocking about all day in the sun, you should write long yarns. On such occasions, a couple of lines demi-officially will satisfy me, until I get a copy of your formal report. All I want is to know what is done, and the reason.'

Nicholson now returned from Phillour to Umritsur, and, hearing of the half-successful rising at Jhelum, he at once disarmed the regiment which was stationed there. Two days later, the still worse news of the complete success of the mutineers at Sealkote reached him, and, judging of the feelings of the wing of cavalry which belonged to his column, by what its other wing had just done at Sealkote, he disarmed that also, and then gathered himself up for his famous spring upon the mutineers, who, flushed with their success, and never dreaming that he was within striking distance, had set out from Sealkote with their faces turned towards Delhi. Their line lay, so Nicholson thought most probable, through Goordaspore, near the Ravi. Thence they would move on Nurpore and Hoshiarpore, and picking up disaffected detachments of horse or foot, Regulars or Irregulars, at each of these places, would bear down, with ever-gathering momentum, on the rear of our hard-pressed forces before Delhi. Could he reach Goordaspore in time to prevent this? It was over forty miles away. The mutineers had two full days' start of him; and the July sun, which must be fatal

to not a few of his European soldiers, would be little or no impediment to the Sepoys. It seemed a wild-goose chase. But those who knew Nicholson well, knew that, more than once before now, he had made the impossible to seem possible enough.

The rest of the day (the 10th) was spent in sweeping off into his camp every gig and cart, every horse and pony which could be found plying on the road between Lahore and Umritsur. Many a soldier who had never crossed a horse before found himself suddenly mounted, to the imminent risk of his neck on a charger taken from the dismounted troopers; while *ekkas* (light carts), warranted to carry two passengers only, were forced to accommodate four. Even so, not a few men had to go on foot.

At dusk, the march began, and, during the comparative cool of the night, gun-carriages and overcrowded carts and walkers managed to traverse in company some twenty-six miles of road. But eighteen more miles still lay before them, and these beneath the full fury of the July sun. Awnings made of the branches of trees were extemporised by the men who rode on the *ekkas* and gun-carriages, and the rough jokes of the soldiers as they started afresh, and the variety of the equipages and breakdowns recalled to more than one eye-witness the road to Epsom on the Derby day. But this could not last long. Men began to fall exhausted or dead by the roadside; and one incident of the march, which has, I think, never found its way into print, is too characteristic of Nicholson to be omitted here.

When the sun was at its fiercest, the Column neared a grove of trees which seemed to promise a refreshing shade; and some of the officers, seeing the exhausted state of their men, suggested that a halt of an hour or two might well be called to enable them to throw themselves on the ground and snatch an interval of repose. 'No,' sternly replied Nicholson, 'we must press on.' But he yielded to more urgent expostulations, and the worn-out men were soon asleep beneath the trees. After an interval, it occurred to one of their number as he woke from his sleep to ask where the general was. Not seeing him amongst the sleepers on the ground, he looked back to the road which they had left, and there, in the very middle of it, in the full glare of the sun, sitting bolt upright

upon his horse, and perfectly motionless, he saw John Nicholson waiting, as, unknown to them all, he had been waiting from the beginning with impatient patience till his men should have had their rest out. The silent protest did its work. The exhausted men started up with a strength which was not altogether their own, and in the course of the afternoon the whole column reached Goordaspore.

Next morning, news came that the mutineers were in the act of crossing the Ravi at the Trimmu Ghaut, or ferry, about nine miles off. There was no time to be lost, and a second march, under the same burning sun, brought the avenger of blood face to face with his foes. The mutinous troopers, who had done most of the work at Sealkote, inflamed by *bhang*, charged gallantly on Nicholson's mounted police, and put them to a headlong flight, which was not stopped till they reached Goordaspore. But the Black Bess of the mutineers was no match for the Enfield rifle, nor was the single broken-down station gun which they had carried off from Sealkote able to hold its own against Nicholson's nine. They were soon driven back towards the river, whose rising waters had made the ford, by which they had so lately crossed, to be unfordable, and they straightway found themselves cooped up in an island in the middle of the stream, while Nicholson was threatening them from one bank, and, as they believed, a pursuing force from Jhelum on the other. Had Nicholson's mounted police stood firm, they could have ridden down the mutineers and cut them to pieces in their flight towards the river. His infantry, worn out by their long march, could do nothing now in the way of pursuit.

But Nicholson could afford to wait; for the mutineers were without boats and could not escape from the island. Three days sufficed to rest his troops and to collect boats, and, on the morning of the 16th, while his nine guns engrossed the attention of the mutineers, he crossed unobserved to the lower part of the island, and, putting himself, as though he were a simple subaltern, at the head of his men, led them against the foe. The single gun was now turned full on his column. It was worked by a fine old havildar, who was evidently prepared to die at his post. Nicholson, famous of old for his feats of swordsmanship, went at him, sword in hand, and, dealing him a blow slantwise on his shoulder,

with that one stroke cut him clean in two, one half of his body falling on one, the other on the other side of his sword. 'Not a bad sliver that!' he said quietly to his aide-de-camp, Randall, who was at his side, and then pursued the flying Sepoys, driving them into the river and destroying them to the last man. Thus, in one short week from its outbreak, the Sealkote Brigade had ceased to exist.

Sir John Lawrence now made up his mind that no Poorbea regiment in the Punjab should be allowed to retain its arms longer than was absolutely necessary. The 4th Native Infantry at Kangra and Nurpore had already been disarmed by Reynell Taylor, and the 10th Light Cavalry at Ferozepore gave up their arms and horses at the command of Brigadier Innes. There had been no definite reason to suspect either of them; but the outbreak at Sealkote made it necessary, in these troublous times, to take away the means to do ill deeds, even from those who might not seem disposed to use them. And now, John Lawrence, who had at length left his solitary station at Rawul Pindi, where he had planned and done so much, sent for Nicholson to Lahore and, to his infinite delight, gave him the long-looked-for order to march for Delhi.

## CHAPTER XIX.

### ABANDONMENT OF PESHAWUR.

JUNE—AUGUST 1857.

THE actions of Sir John Lawrence which I have recorded are all of them based, more or less, upon the supposition that Delhi would soon fall. And that it might fall the sooner and with more overwhelming effect upon the prospects of the Mutiny generally, he was doing, as we have seen, all that man could do. But what if it should not fall? John Lawrence would not have been the statesman that he was; he would not have governed the Punjab as he did govern it, had he shut his eyes to the other and only too possible alternative that our attack, when at last it was delivered, might fail, and that our small and hard-pressed army upon the Ridge might have to retreat, if indeed it could still do so, towards the Punjab. In that case, he knew well that the country between the Jumna and the Sutlej would rise against us; that the Regular troops who had hitherto remained passive would throw off the disguise; that their example would be followed by the Irregular Cavalry, and that again, only too probably, by the inhabitants of the Punjab generally. There was a point, he well knew, beyond which the loyalty even of the Sikhs could not be strained. He knew the natives of India far too intimately to imagine that, govern them as we may, we can ever look for more from them than a passive contentment or acquiescence in our rule, the rule of a people who differ from themselves in habits, character, language, colour, and religion. And he took his measures accordingly.

He was prepared, if matters came to that extremity, to

ask Dost Mohammed to occupy Peshawur, with the understanding that, if he remained true to us, it should revert to him when the struggle was over. We were to retire to Attock and hold the line of the Indus in force, thus setting free some 3,000 European troops from a place which, during three months at least of the year, is the white man's hospital, and, so long as we hold it, must always, it is to be feared, continue to be the white man's grave. A large portion of the troops thus disengaged from Peshawur would be sent at once to Delhi, and would make the early termination of the siege a certainty ; while the gift of Peshawur to the Afghans, to whom it had recently belonged, and who were always ardently longing for its recovery, would do more, he thought, than anything else to secure their permanent friendship and their active alliance in case of an invasion from beyond.

This, then, is what he was prepared to do, if the safety of the Empire, or, what in his judgment, at this juncture, was the same thing, the prosecution of the siege of Delhi, demanded it. That he was prepared calmly to face the outcry which such a proposal would create, at the time, among his lieutenants at Peshawur, and afterwards among the shortsighted and uninstructed throughout India and at home, is not the least striking proof of his moral courage. It shows that he regarded the struggle with the eye of a statesman as well as of a soldier, that he embraced its imperial as well as its local aspects.

We have seen at how early a period in the history of the Mutiny the danger of Peshawur, and the urgent remonstrances of his friends there, had obliged Sir John Lawrence to recall two regiments which he had already despatched towards Delhi, to the defence of the famous valley. He did what he was bound to do and did it ungrudgingly. But looking forward to the future, and observing how the mutineers at Delhi were being daily reinforced, he took occasion, on June 9, to inform his Peshawur friends that if it came to be a question of starving the siege of Delhi in order that more troops might be massed upon the frontier, he would be prepared to draw in that frontier.

The Peshawur authorities were not likely to acquiesce in their chief's view of the comparative importance of Peshawur and of Delhi. They would hardly have been mortal

if they had done so. They immediately held a council at which Edwardes, Nicholson, and Cotton were present; and Edwardes, acting as their mouthpiece, wrote in forcible terms protesting against the bare supposition.

June 11.

My dear John,—We are unanimously of opinion that with God's help we *can* and *will* hold Peshawur, let the worst come to the worst, and that it would be a fatal policy to abandon it and to retire across the Indus. It is the anchor of the Punjab, and if you take it up the whole ship will drift to sea. For keeping the mastery of the Punjab there are only two obligatory points—the Peshawur Valley and the Manjha. All the rest are mere dependences. . . . We think then that all the European force should be concentrated at Peshawur and in the Manjha. . . . Holding these two points, you will hold the whole Punjab. . . . Europeans cannot retreat. Without rum, without beef, without success, they would soon be without hope, without organisation. Cabul would come again. . . . As a general remark, I believe when it comes to our ceding territory we abandon our position in India and shall soon be in the sea. We hope earnestly that you will stand or fall at Peshawur. It must be done somewhere. Let us do it in the front, giving up nothing.

Unanswerable, no doubt, and vigorous and manly, all of this was; but I observe that Sir John Lawrence has written across the letter from which I have given a few extracts, the pregnant remark—'The plan here sketched out would have required us to retain all the European troops in the Punjab.' And was it not equally unanswerable, did it not show equal manliness and vigour, and did it not show a much wider grasp of all the conditions of the problem to say, as John Lawrence did, there is one thing which I consider would be even more fatal than the abandonment of Peshawur, and that is the abandonment of the siege of Delhi? We can doubtless, as you say, ride out the storm in the Punjab, if we determine to keep every European and every native soldier who is now within it around us, but what of India? Peshawur is not India, though it is natural that you should now write as if it were. The Punjab is not India, though it would be even more natural if I, as its chief ruler, were to act as if it were. India lies beyond and above them *both*, and I will send the last available European and the last available native levies to the front, and get on without them, as best I can, rather than allow the historic capital of India,



the heart of India, to remain in the hands of our enemies, or to drive our army in disaster from before its walls.

Meanwhile, as the plot thickened, as Delhi did not fall or give any sign of falling, and as the Chief Commissioner went on draining his province of its men and of its materials for war, the line of argument taken up by Edwardes, and those for whom he spoke, became more urgent and alarmist, as, assuredly, it was also more shortsighted and provincial.

We are all of opinion (he says on the 26th of June) that you must not go on throwing away your resources in detail by meeting General Reed's demands for reinforcements. Delhi is not India, and if General Reed cannot take it with eight thousand men, he will not take it with nine thousand or ten thousand. However important a point, it is only a point, and enough has been done for it . . . . Make a stand! Anchor, Hardy, anchor! Tell General Reed he can have no more men from here, and must either get into Delhi with the men he has got, or get reinforcements from below,\* or abandon the siege and fall back on the Sutlej. Don't try too much. We are outnumbered. Stick to what we can do. Let us hold the Punjab *coûte que coûte*, and not give up one European necessary for that duty. . . . Don't yield an inch of frontier; gather up your forces and restrict yourself to the defence of the Punjab. You cannot spare more Europeans from the Punjab. Make sure of one practicable policy. If General Reed with all the men you have sent him cannot take Delhi, let Delhi go. Decide on it at once and make the Punjab snug before the rains. Don't let yourself be sucked to death by inches in the way Reed is doing. He has his difficulties. We have ours. You have made vast efforts for him, and no one, hereafter, considering these movements, can blame you for now securing your own province. Not that I would say, Secure your own province, if the Empire required its sacrifice. We could sacrifice any other province without a pang or a doubt, but the Empire's reconquest depends on the Punjab. . . . My own belief is that on the reinforcements now being sent reaching General Reed, Delhi will be stormed successfully. If not, another thousand Europeans will not turn the scale—while their removal will endanger the Punjab. Pray take your own line. It is not selfish. It is the good of the Empire. Don't get engulfed in Delhi.

What must have been the result, the inevitable result, had Sir John Lawrence yielded to these reiterated, these egregiously short-sighted appeals to him not to send a man more to Delhi? What but the certain destruction of our force before that place? An assault had been given up by the military authorities as hopeless, unless or until large

\* There were *no* reinforcements to be had 'from below'—i.e. from the North-West Provinces. They had too much to do to hold their own.

reinforcements should arrive from the Punjab. A regular siege was obviously impossible. The enemy were receiving weekly or daily reinforcements, and had at their disposal an unlimited amount of all the material of war. The direct and practical answer which John Lawrence gave to this and every other appeal of the kind may perhaps best be shown by an extract from an earlier letter of June 17 to Hervey Greathed, who had written from before Delhi to tell him of the unexpected numbers of the enemy, and of the excellence of their artillery practice.

We are sending you down every soldier we can spare. I calculate that, by July 1, you ought to have 3,250 men from us. Thus—

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| 7 companies of Her Majesty's 8th, full | 600 |
| 5 " " " 61st, "                        | 450 |
| European Artillerymen                  | 200 |
| 1st Punjab Rifles (Coke's)             | 800 |
| 4th Sikhs " (Rothney's)                | 800 |
| Punjab Cavalry                         | 400 |

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3,250

In fifteen days afterwards, we could send the 1st Punjab Cavalry, now on its way from Mooltan—say 500 sabres—and, probably, twenty days after this, the 2nd Punjab Rifles, now at Mooltan. The latter cannot move until the Beluch Battalion arrives from Sukkur, for it has to watch the native corps whom we have just disarmed. Even, to do thus much, we have had to weaken ourselves a good deal. We have still thirteen regiments of armed native infantry to watch, and a frontier of eight hundred miles to guard. By-the-by, we have the Kumaon Battalion also available, and I purpose sending them down. They do not muster above four hundred and fifty men. I had cause to suspect them in the first instance, and put them in a corner where they could not well do harm. But, since then, I have reason to believe them staunch, and will send them down. They are most anxious to emulate the good conduct of the Ghoorka corps now with the army.

What wonder that the force before Delhi felt that, in the person of the man who could write thus and promise thus and perform thus, they had a base of operations, an arsenal, a commissariat, a very tower of strength, which, come what might, would not fail them? And he did not fail them. No sooner was this large body of reinforcements on their way to Delhi than a demand came from General Reed for the Movable Column itself. This demand John Lawrence could not grant as yet. He entirely agreed with Edwardes that

he must retain his hold on the Punjab, even in preference to taking Delhi. The difference between them was chiefly as to the frontier—whether, if matters came to extremities, the 3,000 Europeans and the large body of native troops at Peshawur would be more useful locked up there, or in preserving the peace throughout the Punjab and pushing the siege of Delhi. On the presence of the Movable Column in the Punjab at that moment depended, he knew well, not only the general protection of the country, but the overawing of some six or seven Poorbea regiments which he had not yet found it advisable or possible to deprive of their arms. When once they had been disarmed he would send the Movable Column, with Nicholson at its head, down to Delhi also.

It was towards the close of June and at the beginning of July that the prospects in the Punjab were at their worst. There were louder and ever louder calls from Delhi for reinforcements. The difficulty of meeting them was growing greater, and the protests of Edwardes and the Peshawur chiefs against the policy of draining the Punjab were becoming more urgent and imperative. It had been hoped by the authorities of Delhi, no less than by Edwardes and by Lawrence, that when the last of the 3,200 fresh troops should have arrived upon the Ridge by the beginning of July, the long-postponed attack would at last be made. But this hope was already vanishing into air. 'I estimate,' says John Lawrence to Edwardes on June 29, 'that, when all our reinforcements arrive, we shall have between seven and eight thousand men before Delhi. But I am sorry to say they appear quite unequal to taking the place. They cannot indeed secure their communications in the rear.'

No message had as yet arrived from Lord Canning as to what should be done if matters came to an extremity, and yet everything seemed to show that the time was drawing near when the question would be one, not of contingent or hypothetical, but of immediate and practical politics; when the fatal choice would have to be made whether the Chief Commissioner should order our forces to withdraw from Peshawur or should declare that he had not another man to send to Delhi. His own mind was quite made up. 'Delhi is the critical point, and I feel I am bound to send every one that I can muster down.' The Peshawur author-

ities were equally clear in their view, for it was at this time that they sent the joint remonstrance from which I have quoted such copious extracts. The European Infantry now in the Punjab amounted only to 5,600 men. Of these, nearly half were in the Peshawur valley. The small remainder had, in conjunction with the Irregulars, to garrison the Capital, to hold the forts of Mooltan and Govindghur, the arsenals of Phillour and Ferozepore, the cantonments of Rawul Pindi and Jullundur, and the passage of the Indus at Attock. They had to contribute eight hundred of their number to the Movable Column, to keep some six or seven Poorbea regiments which still retained their arms from rising, and to prevent those which had already been disarmed from taking themselves off to Delhi. An insurrection, therefore, might, at any time, take place, and Sir John Lawrence made all the preparations by which he might utilise his small force to the utmost, might secure all the most important points, might disarm the Poorbea regiments, and now, even now, send off one more European regiment to Delhi!

Early in July, a letter came from Hervey Greathed, which not only announced that the notion of an assault had been given up, but—in spite of the reinforcements which were arriving day by day from the Punjab—hinted, in no obscure terms, that some even of the bolder and more adventurous spirits in the camp, of whom he himself was certainly one, were beginning to utter the ominous word, retreat.

July 4, 1857.

The determination to take Delhi by assault has been twice on the eve of execution, and I no longer feel confident that it will be again so far matured. And, supposing I am right, the question will arise whether we should maintain our position, or raise the siege, and dispose of our forces as may best secure the public interests until a second campaign be opened.

A fortnight later, came a more alarming letter still from General Archdale Wilson himself, a man on whose accession to power, in place of Reed, Sir John Lawrence and others had been disposed, and not without some reason, to place the highest hopes.

July 18.

I have consulted with Colonel Baird Smith, the Chief Engineer with the Force, and we have both come to the conclusion that any attempt

now to assault Delhi must end in defeat and disaster. The force consists, at present, of 2,200 Europeans and 1,500 natives, or a total of 3,700 bayonets. . . . To enable me, however, to hold this position, I must be strongly reinforced, and that speedily. I hear there is no chance of relief from the forces collecting below, as their attention has been directed towards Oude. I therefore earnestly call upon you to send me, as quickly as possible, such support as you can from the Punjab. . . . I candidly tell you that, unless, speedily reinforced, this force will soon be so reduced by casualties and sickness, that nothing will be left but a retreat to Kurnal. The disasters attending such an unfortunate proceeding I cannot calculate. May I request an immediate reply by telegraph, stating what aid in reinforcements you can afford me, and when I may expect them to join my camp.

What was to be done now? Edwardes and Cotton and Nicholson had again and again warned John Lawrence that he was denuding the Punjab to a dangerous extent, and that he ought not, under any circumstances, to send another European to Delhi. They had told him also, and told him truly, that after the Herculean exertions which he had made to reinforce the army before Delhi, no one could blame him if he now made his own province secure and refused to see dangers which it was convenient for him not to see. No one indeed! But it never occurred to John Lawrence, if he saw his way clear to do a thing, to ask whether he would be praised or blamed for doing it. 'I look'—he wrote to Barnes in words which might have been the motto of his whole life and, not least, of the last few months of it—'I look for neither fame nor abuse. All I wish is to do my duty, and save our rule and those connected with it.' Noble words, which those who have taunted him, during the recent paroxysm of aggressive war, with his 'retiring modesty,' that is to say with his moral courage, would do well to try to understand!

And how did he answer General Archdale Wilson's urgent appeal? Quick as thought—quick, at all events, as the electric wire could take it—back went the inspiring message.

July 21.

I have received yours of the 18th. We can send you off at once 1,700 men, thus—

|                              |     |
|------------------------------|-----|
| Her Majesty's 52nd . . . . . | 600 |
| Military Police . . . . .    | 400 |

|                                |     |
|--------------------------------|-----|
| Kumaon Battery . . . . .       | 400 |
| Mooltani Horse . . . . .       | 200 |
| Nine-pounder Battery . . . . . | 100 |

These to be followed up by some 2,000 more. Why not get a portion of the Meerut Force?

It was a message which might well breathe fresh heart and hope into the small force upon the Ridge, who had sunk down under the influence of the reiterated attacks of the enemy, of exposure to the sun, of fatigue, and of disease, to the number of 3,700 effectives. But John Lawrence was determined to do more, and, if possible, to make the word 'retreat' to be a word that should not be so much as whispered at Delhi. And he wrote as follows to Norman, Assistant Adjutant-General of the Force, and to Daly of the Guides, two kindred spirits to whom he knew that he would not write in vain.

Lahore: July 24.

My dear Norman,—You will have found that I have done all I can in the way of reinforcements. Within the next fifteen days you ought to get the Kumaon Battalion, the 52nd Queen's, and the wing of the 61st, besides a new corps of Punjab Infantry formed out of the Police Battalions of Kangra and Umritsur. There are no Poorbeas in any of them. Green's corps, minus its Poorbeas, ought to be down very soon. In short, I hope that these reinforcements will make you all quite comfortable. I do not think that after this we can send you any more Europeans. Exclusive of the Peshawur force, we are retaining barely 2,400 Infantry to hold the country and keep all the armed and disarmed regiments quiet. . . . If you cannot take Delhi with the aid now sent, at least hold your own, and let Pandey break his head against your entrenchments. You will, by this policy, wear him out. But retreat is out of the question. It will be followed by ruin and disgrace. My idea is that General Wilson should send the new Corps, the 7th Punjab Infantry, under Stafford to Saharunpore, and bring the Ghoorkas to the army. I would also send a wing of Green's corps to Meerut, and bring a large part of the 60th Rifles to Delhi. Again, when the Beluchis get to Delhi, they might go to Meerut, and the wing of Green's come over. Thus you would have your best soldiers at Delhi, the second best at Meerut, and the young ones at Saharunpore, quite good enough to settle the Goojurs and other rascals. . . . The Punjab is very quiet, and, so far as I can judge, loyal also. Please God, I will keep it so. But recollect, if you fall back from Delhi, our cause is gone. Neither the Punjab nor anywhere else can stand. Show this to General Wilson.

To Daly he writes :—

If we are beaten at Delhi and have to retreat, our army will be destroyed. Neither Peshawur nor even the Punjab will then be of much good. Both will go. Whereas the Peshawur and Kohat force would give 9,000, besides some 30 guns. Now, in my mind, such a force brought into the field in time will turn the tide, or, at any rate, stem it, until the cold weather. But such a force, when the army before Delhi is gone, and the Punjab in insurrection, will be swallowed up in the general whirlwind. I hope and expect that there will be no occasion for the sacrifice. But no man can say what is in store for us, and *it is necessary that we take a statesmanlike view of the subject*, and decide on the line of policy to be followed. Otherwise, when the time comes, we shall be unable to act. Read this to Chamberlain, and let me know his views. I am for holding Lahore and Mooltan to extremity, and no more, sending the women and children down to Kurrachi, if things go wrong at Delhi.

To General Cotton a few days later (July 30) he says :—

What think you? We have not 4,500 effective Europeans and Native Cavalry and Infantry before Delhi. There are 1,100 laid up sick or with wounds. God grant that our reinforcements may arrive in time! I anticipate that 1,100 Europeans and 1,300 Native Infantry will be down by the 15th proximo. My policy is to support the army as far as possible. If it fail all will fail. This is the crisis of our fate.

The crisis indeed it was. Chamberlain and Norman, Daly and Wilson were all writing to John Lawrence to say that what they wanted was not raw levies of any kind, but seasoned troops, European and Native, and of these he, even he, felt at last that he had no more to spare. 'I have sent all I can, perhaps more than I ought to have sent.' The Neemuch mutineers had just poured into Delhi. The ghastly massacre at Cawnpore had taken place, and the tales of foul treachery, of women and children slaughtered in cold blood and subjected, as was then believed—though wrongly believed—to indignities which were worse than death, had stirred to fever heat the pulses of even the more self-restrained of our soldiers upon the Ridge, and had excited wild yearnings for revenge, which, so long as the guilty city frowned in its unbroken strength before them, could not be gratified. At Lahore itself, the 26th Regiment, which had long been disarmed, had broken out, almost under the eyes of the Chief Commissioner, directly after his arrival there, into mutiny and murder, and had

managed to move off as an organised force. Alarming letters were coming in, some from Cashmere, saying that Golab Sing, who—whatever his crimes towards his subjects—had been true to those who had placed him on his throne, was on his deathbed, and suggesting that a change of rulers might, very probably, involve a change of policy; others from Lumsden at Candahar, warning Sir John Lawrence that the delay before Dehli was exciting great attention there, and that the Afghans were 'longing to have a slap at us.'

But here, as elsewhere, the darkest hour was that before the dawn. On August 1, the small army on the Ridge won a decisive victory over the mutineers. News arrived that the force intended for China had been intercepted, had landed at Calcutta, and was being pushed up the country; that the English Government had decided, directly they heard of the outbreak, to send out reinforcements to India; that Havelock, after winning victory after victory in his brilliant march, had reached, though he had not yet cleansed, the human shambles at Cawnpore, that he was about to relieve Lucknow, and then press on for Agra and Delhi; that, though Golab Sing was dead, his son Runbeer continued to tread in his safe and easy footsteps, and was prepared to send down a Cashmere contingent, 3,250 strong, under the control of Richard Lawrence, to Delhi; that the mutineers of the 26th Regiment had been overtaken and killed almost to the last man, and that the Afghans, seeing which way the wind was blowing, instead of invading India were anxious, as Edwardes wrote, to aid us in reconquering it. And thus before the message sent *via* Madras and Bombay from Lord Canning to Sir John Lawrence, 'Hold on to Peshawur to the last,' reached him on the 7th of the month, the tide had turned decisively in our favour, and he was able in mentioning the matter to Edwardes to speak thus about it: 'The Governor-General bids me hold on to the last at Peshawur. I do not, however, now think that we shall be driven to any extremity. The tide is turning very decidedly against the mutineers at Delhi, and, before long, I hope to see them all destroyed. Not a man of the 26th appears to have escaped; and we have all the other corps pitched in cantonments, under the range of the guns.'



Thus ended the Peshawur episode. The question had ceased to be a burning question before Lord Canning's decision arrived, and simply because John Lawrence's arduous exertions had made it possible that it should do so. I have treated the subject at considerable length for the reasons which I have already given. For it is, beyond question, clear from the letters I have quoted that Sir John Lawrence proposed to abandon Peshawur, only under certain conditions, which, though they did not occur, might have occurred at any time, and would, most certainly, have done so, had it not been for his moral courage and his unflagging exertions. It is also clear from them that he was convinced that on the capture of Delhi within a reasonable time not only the continuance of our rule, but the life of every Englishman in Upper India depended, and that no sacrifice would be too great to make if that object could not be attained without it.

He proposed, it will be observed, not to abandon Peshawur to its fate, 'to leave it in the air,' but, formally, to cede it to the Afghans. It was a step sufficiently opposed to the views which have, of late, been prevalent in official circles in England and in India. But it was not a step which John Lawrence, with all his immense knowledge of the frontier and of the Hindu, Punjabi, and Pathan races, with his keen appreciation also of the danger to India which the approach of Russia might involve, thought, either then or later, would be to our disadvantage. Of course, nothing but imperious and imperial necessity, nothing but the *salus populi suprema lex* would have induced him to retire from Peshawur while there were still disturbances within our frontier. But, none the less, he thought that what might then have seemed a measure of desperation, would, afterwards, prove a source of strength and stability to the whole of our empire in the East.

In any case, the course recommended by John Lawrence received the support of two soldiers unsurpassed for courage and for chivalry in the recent history of India—of Sir James Outram \* and Sir Neville Chamberlain.

\* For Outram's views of the subject see his *Life*, by Sir Frederick Goldsmid, Preface, p. 13, and vol. ii., Appendix K, p. 424.

I have not (says Chamberlain in writing to Lawrence on June 11, 1859), lost sight of the question during my tour of inspection along the frontier, and I may indeed say that I have courted the society of all ranks and classes for the double object of becoming acquainted with the present state of public affairs, both within and beyond our border, and studying, to the best of my ability, all the bearings of the Peshawur question. When we discussed the matter in July last (1858), I daresay you will recollect that, although I saw much to make withdrawal advisable, I could not bring myself to overcome what I considered the loss of prestige attendant on a retrograde movement, and was in favour of a sort of medium course, by which we might still hold the districts, but at a less outlay of money and European life. Now, however, I am in favour of making it over to the Afghans, and, to start with, to the Barukzais, for I feel assured that such a course would go farther to preserve the peace of this frontier against Russia or other European influence than anything else it is in our power to do, and that nothing short of this will bind the ruler of the Afghans to us, or cause him to break off entirely from the Russians.

If we had the men (Europeans) and the money to meet all enemies, at all times, and from whatever countries, well and good. But no man can really know our position in India, and believe this to be the case. There is too much makeshift for our weakness and vulnerability not to be apparent to anyone who chooses to see things as they are. And, on this account, I, for one, should be glad to see the Afghans made our friends, by making it their interest to remain so. So much do I believe in this that, if I were dying to-morrow, I should feel more at rest did I know that we were going to confer the two districts on the Afghans; whilst, if I were a traitor to my country, I feel that ten thousand Russian troops, and the promise of the country up to the Indus, would bring down upon us a storm which it would be most difficult for us to meet, unless we were able to devote a large portion of our thoughts to it.

There are two kinds of courage. There is the buoyant courage of the man who is blessed by heaven with a sanguine temperament; the man who *will* not see danger; who is able to walk about with a smiling countenance and with a cheerful heart amidst mines and powder magazines; who is able to write bulletins, such as those which were issued almost daily from Lahore during the first two months of the Mutiny; 'all well in the Punjab; no cause for anxiety,' and, undoubtedly, helped to bring about their own fulfilment. Such a courage, it is needless to say, tends to propagate itself, and is simply invaluable in the case of all those who are not bound by their position to take the farthest possible outlook into the future. Such, happily for us, was the disposition of many of the chief officers in the

Punjab at the time of need ; and such, pre-eminently, I am inclined to think, was the courage of Sir Robert Montgomery.

But there is another, and, if I am not mistaken, a higher courage still. There is the cool deliberate courage of the responsible ruler, who is determined to 'shut his eyes to nothing, to explore all the ramifications of the danger, to realise to himself, and to take care that others should realise also, so far as it is necessary for them to do so, the full magnitude of the stake at issue, and then, having counted the cost beforehand, and having recognised the possibility, or even the probability of failure, sits down, determined, by every means in his power, to make the probable, improbable, and the possible, impossible. It is the prerogative of such a man, and only of such a man, to 'look ahead,' to 'take a statesmanlike view,' and, careless of what others may say or think of him, 'looking for neither praise nor blame,' with dogged determination to do the right whatever comes of it, and to fall, if need be, at his post. Such, it appears to me, was the courage of Sir John Lawrence.

And, if it be true, as Aristotle says, in his searching analysis of the chief moral virtues, that the nobleness of courage depends mainly on the consciousness of the sacrifice which it involves, then, assuredly, Sir John Lawrence's was the noblest kind of courage. He was the 'Happy Warrior'

—who, if he be called upon to face  
Some awful moment to which heaven has joined  
Great issues, good or bad for human kind,  
Is happy as a lover, and attired  
With sudden brightness, like a man inspired,  
And through the heat of conflict keeps the law  
In calmness made, and sees what he foresaw ;  
Or, if an unexpected call succeed,  
Come when it will, is equal to the need.  
He who, though thus endued as with a sense  
And faculty for storm and turbulence,  
Is yet a soul whose master-bias leans  
To home-felt pleasures and to gentle scenes.  
Sweet images ! which whereso'er he be  
Are at his heart, and such fidelity  
It is his darling passion to approve,  
More brave for this that he hath much to love.

## CHAPTER XX.

### SIEGE AND CAPTURE OF DELHI.

JULY-SEPTEMBER 1857.

I HAVE been compelled, in order that I may treat the question of the abandonment of Peshawur in the manner in which I conceive it ought to be treated, as an episode and as a whole, to look forward as well as backward from the point which I had reached at the close of Chapter XVIII., and to that point I now return. We last saw Sir John Lawrence at Rawul Pindi, when the outbreak, which took place there on July 8, had turned out—thanks, chiefly, to his disregard of his personal safety—to be an almost bloodless outbreak. The time had now come when his presence was more needed at the centre of his government than at the more upland station, where he had happened to be when the news of the Meerut mutiny first reached him. What a lifetime, or seeming lifetime, had passed in those two months! How events had crowded on each other! How, as one danger appeared to be laid, another and another had sprung up, like the Hydra's heads, to take its place; and how each and all of them had been met, in turn, with the same imperturbable resolution and the same unflagging energy!

On June 23, in his rapid run to Murri and back, Sir John Lawrence had snatched, as I have already shown, the one interval of toilsome rest which he had allowed himself during the whole period. But the redoubled energy, the refreshing of the soul, the *vis viva* breathed into him by the sight of the calm courage of his wife, was not to be measured by the flying nature of his visit to her. And now,

on July 15, in spite of the Jhelum and Sealkote mutinies, which had not yet spent their force, and which might well have made many a dry *nullah* and many a saint's tomb that he passed on his way to be the lurking place of an assassin, he started for Lahore on the ordinary mail cart, accompanied by Arthur Brandreth only, and without even a mounted policeman as escort! Had the mutineers only known, and been able to grasp their opportunity; had some well-aimed bullet, or the dagger of some paradise-seeking Ghazi, found its way to John Lawrence's heart, what would not have been the difference to the prospects of the besiegers on the distant Ridge? The answer to the question will give, in some measure, the value of the man, then and throughout the crisis, to India.

By the 19th, he had reached Lahore, unscathed and in good heart; and now, in rapid succession, arrived from day to day those urgent letters from Wilson and from others before Delhi, which, in spite of the equally urgent remonstrances from Peshawur, he answered by sending forth from his almost exhausted province another batch of reinforcements, four thousand strong, with Nicholson at their head. 'We must support,' he said, 'the army before Delhi at the sacrifice of every other consideration.'

That Nicholson was at the head of the Column was a sufficient security that there would be no unnecessary delay in its advance. His first act was characteristic enough, and it was one which, in later times, his chief was very fond of relating. The Punjab was badly supplied with guns, but as Delhi, possibly, wanted them even more, the Chief Commissioner and the General in Command agreed to allow Bouchier's battery to join the column, explicit orders being given that Dawes's battery, on which Nicholson had also cast an envious eye, should be left behind, unless General Wilson wrote to say that its presence was absolutely necessary for the siege. Nicholson, more anxious, as it appeared afterwards, to secure the presence of Dawes, who might succeed to the command of the Column if anything happened to himself, than of his battery, pounced down upon both at once, and moved off with them, bodily, towards Delhi!

Nicholson gave such explanation as he could, but the ink of his apology can scarcely have been dry before he dis-

counted its effect, and capped his previous doings by carrying off, on his own responsibility, a body of gunners from Phillour. 'I fear you are incorrigible,' says John Lawrence on August 4, half, doubtless, in anger, but half also in amusement and in admiration, 'so I must leave you to your fate. But, depend on it, you would get on equally well and much more smoothly if you worked *with* men rather than by ignoring them.' But John Lawrence was still willing, if possible, to meet the wishes of his new Brigadier-General and give him Dawes. 'By the time Wilde arrives, if the battery can be spared, it shall go down, if I can manage it. However, we are very weak, and these guns do assuredly give us a certain strength.'

But, meanwhile, the Lahore authorities were to receive a stern reminder that, with four regiments disarmed in their immediate neighbourhood and with only a part of a single European regiment to keep them in check, they were sitting on a powder magazine which might, at any time, hurl them into the air. During a period of two and a half months the disarmed regiments had kept the peace, brooding, doubtless, over their grievances, conscious that, at any moment, the act of a single individual amongst them might involve the whole body in ruin, and therefore naturally ready to break out and escape if they saw a favourable opportunity. It is as unnecessary as it would be unjust to refrain from pointing out how much there was to call for compassion and allowance in the condition of these poor men, who, sincerely believing, to begin with, that their religion was in danger, had been disarmed and dishonoured, and were now swayed hither and thither by panic fears, conscious that they carried, or could hardly even be said to carry, their lives in their hands. Whatever may have been the tone of too many Englishmen, at the time, in speaking or in writing of the Sepoys, John Lawrence, again and again in his letters, shows that he felt keenly how much there was to be said in extenuation of their guilt, and that he knew full well how many of them, while cherishing the best intentions towards us, had been simply hurried away by the stream. It was nothing, in fact, but the knowledge that the lives of every European depended upon the promptitude and vigour of the measures taken, which justified to

his mind the stern severity with which all risings in the Punjab were put down.

At last, on July 30, the long-expected opportunity came, and one of the regiments, the 26th, took advantage of it.

We had (says Sir John Lawrence) a sad and scandalous affair here two days ago. It appears that the 26th had, for two days, been selling off their property, preparatory to a start. At eleven A.M. on the 30th, they were all ready, and had cooked their farewell meal. Some little excitement attracted attention, and then Major Spencer walked down in his *paijammās* (loose drawers) from his house close by, into the lines. There he was joined by the quartermaster-sergeant. He had apparently quieted the men, when he got to the 2nd Company, who crowded round him, and a man from behind laid him dead by a blow from an axe. The quartermaster-sergeant, the havildar-major, and two others were killed with him. The pundit also was nearly killed. The men then started right through the cantonments, and though seen by many, with the Sikh Regiment close by, panting to be at them, nothing was done! At last, a party with guns, Europeans and Sikhs, were sent out, galloped two or three miles, are said to have killed a few men, and then came back. Montgomery, I, and Roberts, the Commissioner, got the news about half-past two o'clock P.M., and were there at three. We went out after them, and, not seeing the trail, at a venture sent the pursuers towards Umritsur, Hariki, and Hussur, the roads for the different ghauts on the Sutlej. We now hear that the men, about six hundred in number, after going a little way due east, turned north, and went forty miles right up the doab, and were seen, yesterday morning, at a ghaut on the Ravi, and are evidently trying to get across, and so on to the Jummoo territory.

On the evening of the day on which he wrote this account he was able to report to Lord Canning that the Umritsur police had 'disposed of' at least five out of the six hundred mutineers. Many had been killed and drowned in the attempt to cross the Ravi, and upwards of two hundred and forty who had been captured had been shot on the following morning.

Thus the great danger had passed by. The Punjab Government, it must be borne in mind—if we are to weigh the whole circumstances of the case fairly—was, at this moment, literally in extremity. The last and greatest of its succours had been sent off, and Nicholson, who, under somewhat similar circumstances, had given a short shrift to the Sealkote mutineers, was now, as every malcontent knew well, far away at Umballa, with his face set stead-

fastly for Delhi. The escape of so large a body of mutineers might, under such circumstances, well have caused a general rising among the numerous disarmed regiments in the Punjab, and would certainly have induced the three regiments at Mean Meer to follow their example. Terrible, therefore, as was the retribution and deplorable as was the sacrifice of human life, I do not think that we can fairly condemn the act itself. And that such was Sir John Lawrence's own feeling, who, as I have shown repeatedly, was never for unnecessary severity, is evident from the hasty note which he wrote off on the first receipt of the telegram to the chief actor in the tragedy, and which was afterwards quoted by that actor for a widely different purpose. Its date, it should be observed, is August 2, when no details were known to him over and above the bare facts which he had reported to Lord Canning.

My dear Cooper,—I congratulate you on your success against the 26th Native Infantry. You and your police acted with much energy and spirit, and deserve well of the State. I trust the fate of these Sepoys will operate as a warning to others. Every effort should be exerted to glean up those who are yet at large.

The fact that Lord Canning as well as Sir John Lawrence considered that, under the circumstances, the execution was necessary, and that their opinion was endorsed, many months afterwards, by so cool-headed a man as Lord Stanley, when the matter came before Parliament, and was sharply criticised there, will probably carry a sad conviction to most minds. But it is otherwise with the details of the execution as they began slowly to ooze out and as they were reported in terms of glowing exultation by the executioner himself. An officer who steels his heart in order to perform a painful but absolutely necessary public duty, is entitled to the compassion, the sympathy, and the support of all right-thinking men. But when the deed is done with evident satisfaction and when its most repulsive details are recorded, at a later period, and in cold blood, with ribald flippancy, then our feelings of sympathy and compassion are turned into those of loathing and disgust.

The rising at Lahore was followed by similar risings of



disarmed regiments at two other important stations in the Punjab, the whole clearly showing, if proof was needed, in how perilous a condition the denuded province lay, and how absolutely necessary it was, if the Punjab and India were to stand, that Delhi must soon fall. At Ferozepore it had been thought necessary after the outbreaks at Jhelum and Sealkote to dismount and disarm the 10th Cavalry, a regiment which, up to that time, had been conspicuous for its fidelity, and which still continued to hope, in its humbled condition, that the day would come when it would be trusted again. The horses of the men had been already drawn off in detachments to supply the needs of the Artillery and of the Jummoo troops who were starting for Delhi; and when, on August 14, the order came to withdraw all that were left, the whole regiment rose, and, carrying off all the animals on which they could lay their hands, left for Delhi. No effectual pursuit was organised, and the greater part of the regiment got off through Hansi to their destination.

The other outbreak took place at Peshawur, and with a very different result. If Cotton or Edwardes or James had gone to sleep for a moment at their posts, the awakening would have indeed been a rough one. They worked and watched together as one man, and the civilians were as ready for any deed of military daring as the military themselves. In the month of July, for instance, Fort Mackeson, near the entrance of the Kohat Pass, had been saved from the combined attack of traitorous Sepoys from within, and of Afridis from without, by the skill and courage of Edwardes; while Norinji, a village beyond our frontier in the Eusofzye country, where the Ghazis were mustering in great force and proclaiming a holy war, was cleared of the enemy by similar energy on the part of James. In August, there were fewer troubles, for the simple reason that many of the most villainous of the borderers had been enlisted in our service. But there was the far greater danger to which Lawrence had looked forward with apprehension from the beginning, the autumnal fever. If the Poorbeas suffered much by it, the Europeans were sure to suffer more, and disease had already begun to do its deadly work, when the rumour spread that large quantities of arms were being purchased

and were, even then, lying hid within the lines of the three disarmed regiments. The whole, therefore, might start up, at any moment, ready armed, and be joined by the two cavalry regiments which had not been compelled to go through the form of disarmament.

It was no time for parleying with mutiny. A search was ordered in the lines of the 51st, on the morning of August 25, and while the young Sikh and Afghan levies were engaged in the congenial task of searching the huts of their hereditary foes, the whole regiment 'rose as one man,' and after fighting bravely with such weapons as came to hand, were overpowered and put to flight. The long pursuit from Peshawur to Jumrood was one grand battue, in which no quarter was either asked or granted; and when, forty-eight hours afterwards, the guns on the parade ground had done their grim work with such stragglers as had been picked up when the pursuit was over, the whole regiment, eight hundred and seventy strong—a regiment with the proud names of Punniar, Punjab, Mooltan, and Gujerat inscribed upon its colours—had ceased to exist.

While these ghastly scenes were being witnessed in the outlying districts of his province, the Chief Commissioner's work at the capital never slackened for a moment. His correspondence, indeed, seems to grow in interest and importance, as he finds himself better able, now that his last reinforcements have been sent to the front, to look forward to the more congenial work of pacification and reconstruction which was to follow the fall of Delhi.

On August 5, he wrote to William Muir—a man who was then a stranger to him, but was, afterwards, to become one of his intimate friends, and to fill one of the most responsible posts in his Viceregal Government—the first of a series of important letters, which after discussing Havelock's movements winds up in words which acquire a melancholy interest when we cast our eyes onwards to the letters of the following day. 'If you can hear any authentic news from Lucknow, kindly send me word. Send my brother also a copy of this letter.' 'Authentic news' from Lucknow did come on the morrow, and told him that his noble-hearted brother was no more. He had died a soldier's death—the death which, perhaps, of all others he would

have most coveted—while defending against desperate odds the Residency of his Capital.

In time of war, it often happens that the best and ablest of soldiers, the man whose name has been on everybody's lips, and who has managed to wind himself round everybody's heart, is taken away, leaving little more than a mere passing impression behind him. A few prayers at the grave, a few shovelfuls of earth, a few tears from the faithful few—and, out of sight is out of mind! The dead are forgotten in the fierce struggle for life among the living.

But not in this wise—though in the midst of a struggle for empire and for life, the like to which has rarely taxed the energies of Englishmen—was the passing away of Sir Henry Lawrence, and not such the nature of the impression which he had made on those who knew him well. At Delhi and at Lahore, in Rajpootana and in Huzara, at Peshawur and at Mooltan were to be found men, the foremost in council and in the field, the men on whom all India was then hanging, whom he had inspired by his noble example, and had bound to himself by ties of affection and respect which death could only rivet more indissolubly. They worked on indeed, without stint or stay, for the common safety, as he would have wished them to have done, even when the chilling news first came. But they did so, henceforward, with leaden hearts. For they felt—and I am told that the feeling often found expression in words—as if India could only be half-saved, now that Sir Henry Lawrence was no more! 'The fall of Delhi,' says Herbert Edwardes in writing to John Lawrence some six weeks later when another great name had been added to the dead, 'has happened at the critical moment for the Punjab. Alas, what has it cost us! I feel as if, at Lucknow and Delhi, I had lost the father and brother of my public life. Never again can India be the home to me that it has been for the last ten years.'

'It has indeed been a grievous calamity to us all,' says John Lawrence in his reply. 'There is no man in India who perhaps, at this time, could not have been better spared. The blow came like a clap of thunder upon us. . . . I believe he had not left an abler or a better soldier behind him. His loss, just now, will be a national calamity.'

The simple tombstone erected over the grave of Henry Lawrence, in front of the Residency which he had held till death, bears the inscription suggested by himself, 'Here lies Henry Lawrence, who tried to do his duty.' It is the epitome of his life. Some years afterwards, when his younger brother returned as Governor-General to India, he visited the sacred spot; and I have been told that the expression on his weather-beaten countenance, as he stood beside the grave in silence, was a sight never to be forgotten by those who witnessed it.

There did a thousand memories crowd upon him,  
Unspeakable for sadness.

But with his regret for the misunderstandings which had never been quite cleared up, and the heart-burnings which had never been quite healed over on this side the grave, there must have been a glow of noble pride in the work which they had yet managed to do together, as well as in the life which had been lived, and in the death which had been died, by him who slept below.

Sir John Lawrence had sent off the last man from the Punjab. But he was not yet content to rest, Nicholson's column was nearing Delhi, and Dawes's battery was following hard behind. But the ball might still be kept rolling from Kashmere. Runbeer had succeeded Golab; and, if the Chief Commissioner could manage it, he was to succeed also to all his father's obligations. Lieutenant Urmston, who had been Assistant Commissioner at Peshawur, happened, during the Mutiny, to be in Kashmere, on a kind of sick leave, as the redoubtable Nicholson had been before him. On him, therefore, naturally fell the preliminary negotiations with Golab and his son; and the result was that he strongly advised Lawrence, for the omen's sake, to accept the proffered aid. Golab was much too astute, he thought, not to be true to us. Early in the Mutiny, the Kashmere ruler had had an interview with Urmston, on a raft moored in the middle of a river, when, pointing to a cloud which just then happened to be passing over the sun, 'the Mutiny,' he exclaimed, 'will be just like that fleeting cloud.' But the whole burden of the arrangements

for sending down the Contingent to Delhi, and the full responsibility for doing so, was to fall on Sir John Lawrence. He had first to convince himself that the troops were fairly trustworthy, and that they would be able to do respectable work. And then he had the still harder task of persuading General Wilson not to render them useless by putting them to duties which they could not perform, or positively harmful by showing his suspicions of them.

And then, thinking that he might be able to form a more accurate judgment of their capabilities, and confirm them in their fidelity by a personal interview, he set out for the purpose, in the middle of all his other work, caught them up at Jullundur, inspected them, promised them gratuities if they should be wounded, and pensions to their heirs if they should fall in battle, distributed a bounty of five thousand rupees, and gave all the native officers robes of honour. What wonder, after this, that they went off, as he said, very *kush* (happy)? 'They are a fine body of men,' he says to Edwardes, 'young, active, and well-made, just the lads for a hillside, but not showing the bone and muscle of the Singhs.' The whole incident shows again that 'infinite capacity for taking pains,' on which I have already remarked.

Meanwhile, there was a lull in the operations, before Delhi. News of the tragedies at Cawnpore and Lucknow had reached the camp; and it was clear that Havelock, whatever might be his wishes, and whatever the brilliancy of his victories, would be unable to move northwards for many a day. Reinforcements from England, it was also clear, could not now be looked for till the crisis was past; for the English Government, evidently in profound ignorance of its urgency, instead of hurrying out regiments by the quickest possible route overland, were allowing them to waste two precious months in the voyage round the Cape. Hope, therefore, of help from without—otherwise than from John Lawrence—there was none at all. To keep his troops as much as possible under shelter of his camp, to husband his ammunition, to wait till the last man and the last heavy gun had arrived from the Punjab—such seemed to be General Wilson's wisest policy, while Nicholson was on his way, and while the Siege Train of heavy guns from Phillour and Ferozepore was dragging its slow length along.

Happily, such news as was brought us from the interior of the city by the Intelligence Department, which was under the able direction of Hodson, went to show that passive resistance would do almost as much for us as more active measures. There were jealousies and open feuds, so Hodson's spies brought back word, among the population of the city generally, among the military leaders, and even in the palace itself. The old king, they said, was being insulted by swashbucklers in open Durbar, the generals often quarrelled in his presence, his sons were busy intriguing against him and against one another, the treasury was empty, and the forced loan, which had now been levied, for the third time, on the unhappy merchants, had left little to be looked for either in the way of loyalty or money from them. Did the Great Mogul order the troopers who had pitched their camp in the middle of his garden to leave it? They flatly refused to go. Did he taunt his army with their numerous defeats, and with their failure to capture a single gun from an enemy who was so much their inferior in numbers? He found that his taunts were as powerless as his threats. He had already opened communications with the English, offering to admit them into the Palace, and so into the city, if his pension were guaranteed to him; communications which, it should be added, Sir John Lawrence, who had always thought him more sinned against than sinning, had been disposed to entertain, if he could first prove himself to be guiltless of English blood. But the negotiations had fallen through, and the poor old dotard was now talking of abdication and of a pilgrimage to Mecca, a town which, in his second childhood, he seems—like the Children Crusaders of the Middle Ages—to have thought lay in some adjoining district, not many days' march from his home! Meanwhile, the bazaars were being rifled afresh by each new batch of mutineers as they entered the city. Some regiments, when they arrived, found the city gates closed against them; for those who were already inside wished to keep all the plunder to themselves. Others turned away in disgust because they could not get a share of the spoils which had been already divided. The whole city was at the mercy of a rude soldiery. The sanctity of the harem was invaded, and honour and life were as unsafe as property.

Thus, all the news which reached us went to show that if the besieged were given time to cut their own throats, they might, very possibly, save us the trouble of doing so. One spirited body of mutineers, indeed, stung by the taunts of the old king, engaged to fight us continuously for a week. We met them, for several days, with defensive tactics, but at last, on August 12, we suddenly took the offensive, drove them pell-mell into the city, and captured their guns, though at the cost, for the rest of the siege, of the services of two of the best officers in camp, Brigadier Showers and Major Coke, both of whom fell severely wounded.

About this time (to quote the words of an eye-witness, the author of one of the best books upon the siege of Delhi) \* a stranger of very striking appearance was remarked visiting all our picquets, examining everything, and making most searching inquiries about their strength and history. His attire gave no clue to his rank; it evidently never gave the owner a thought. Moreover, in those anxious times, everyone went as he pleased; perhaps no two officers were dressed alike. . . . He was a man cast in a giant mould, with massive chest and powerful limbs, and an expression ardent and commanding, with a dash of roughness; features of stern beauty, a long black beard, and deep sonorous voice. There was something of immense strength, talent, and resolution in his whole gait and manner, and a power of ruling men on high occasions that no one could escape noticing at once. His imperial air, which never left him, and which would have been thought arrogant in one of less imposing mien, sometimes gave offence to the more unbending among his countrymen, but made him almost worshipped by the pliant Asiatics. He seemed to disdain any other than a ruling part, speaking rarely in ordinary society. Such a man would have risen rapidly from the ranks of the legions to the throne of the Cæsars; but, in the service of the British, it was thought wonderful that he became a Brigadier-General, when, by seniority, he could only have been a captain.

It is hardly necessary to say that the stranger thus graphically described was Nicholson. The quick march of his column had been still more quickened by an express from General Wilson, which reached him on August 2, and was written in the most urgent terms.

Obedient to the summons, Nicholson had 'pushed on' with all speed, and, when within three or four marches of Delhi, had, on a second request of General Wilson, ridden ahead of his force to consult with him, and all unknown,

\* *History of the Siege of Delhi*, by an Officer who served there, p. 223.

except to the old Punjabis, had appeared, on August 7, in the middle of the camp of which he was so soon to become a ruling spirit. His cold reserved bearing, his apparent haughtiness, and the circumstances attending his appointment, caused many of the old officers, at first, to look askance at him. The 'Autocrat of All the Russias,' as he used to be called by his Punjabi friends, generally, either took men by storm, at first sight, by his noble bearing, or he alienated them seriously. On the following day, he returned to his force, having taken the measure, as he thought, of the military position and of the chief military authorities. And, on the 14th, he again rode into the English camp at the head of his column; at the head, that is, of the greatest contribution sent by the Chief Commissioner of the Punjab to the enterprise which still lay unfinished—it might almost be said not yet begun in front of him.

The small force upon the Ridge, raised now to 8,000 men of all arms, could breathe more freely, and not many days elapsed before the post of danger and of honour fell to the new comer. The Siege Train was still on its way, as the mutineers knew well, and the Neemuch Brigade, supported by that of Bareilly, had been sent out from Delhi to intercept it. But Nicholson determined instead to intercept them.

He set out with his Column of 2,000 men on August 25. The country was much flooded. Rain was falling in torrents, and the Horse Artillery guns were soon almost buried in the bog. Most generals would have given up the project in despair, but hearing about mid-day that the enemy were some twelve miles ahead, at Nujffgurh, by sheer force of will, he induced his drenched and tired-out men to push on. They came in sight of the enemy an hour before sunset, and, then and there, Nicholson attacked them in position, and, by a series of masterly movements, put them to flight, capturing the whole of their thirteen guns! The Bareilly Brigade, which was in earshot of the battle, hearing of what had befallen their Neemuch brothers, returned to Delhi without so much as striking a blow.

It is hardly necessary to add that no one in camp looked askance at Nicholson after this, for it was the greatest blow which the mutineers had yet received. The delight



of Sir John Lawrence at this first achievement of his new Brigadier-General before Delhi was unfeigned.

Though sorely pressed with work, I write a line to congratulate you on your success. I wish I had the power of knighting you on the spot. . . . Don't assault until you have given the mutifeers all the powder and shot which the Siege Train can spare, and then go in, and may God be with you all !

Nicholson would not have cared much for being ' knighted on the spot,' but he did care very much for the service he had done, and for the good opinion of his chief.

Many thanks (he wrote back) for your kind letter of the 27th. I would much rather win the good opinion of my friends, than any kind of honorary distinction. . . . I feel very thankful for my success, for had these two Brigades succeeded in getting to our rear, they would, undoubtedly, have done much mischief.

But however anxious Lawrence might be for the assault, he was not anxious, as were some of his advisers, that as much blood as possible should be shed during and after it. He was eager to save the Sikhs, who were in Delhi, from sharing the fate of the Sepoys, and also to draw a distinction between those Sepoys who had murdered their officers and committed other atrocities, and those who had been drawn into the current half against their will. Many letters passed between him, Wilson, and Nicholson on these subjects. Wilson was anxious to receive the overtures of such half-innocent corps, but seemed disinclined to take upon himself the responsibility of doing so. He turned to Sir John Lawrence for advice, and here is the answer he received :—

As you are aware, I have no authority whatever at Delhi or in Delhi matters. But I consider every officer ought to aid the State to the best of his ability and to assume responsibility where that course is advisable. If, therefore, you deem it expedient to receive the overtures of corps, or portions of corps, which have not murdered Europeans, and find it necessary to give distinct pledges for pardon, I am quite prepared to share the responsibility. . . . The combination has been so extensive, the mutiny so general, that it is impossible for us to carry on a war of vengeance against all. We cannot destroy all the mutineers who have fought against us. The sooner we open the door for escape to the least guilty, the better for all parties.

Nicholson quite agreed with his chief in these matters. He was ever panting for action ; straining like a hound within the leashes when he sees his quarry slipped close before him. But it is interesting to note in his letters to Sir John Lawrence, amidst his expressions of impatience at what he considered to be the incompetency of those who held the chief command, his tender regard for the interests of men in whom, even if he had only recently come to know them, he discerned real merit or promise for the future. Here is a sample :—

I offered Randall of the 59th the Adjutancy of Stafford's corps, but he wishes to serve here, though on his bare subaltern's pay. Bear this in mind, if anything happens to me ; for it is not every man who declines Staff employ that he may serve in the trenches on his regimental allowances and without increase of rank. Randall is, moreover, a very steady, intelligent, conscientious fellow.

Nor is it without interest to remark that the officer whom Nicholson, on the strength of what he had seen of him at the Trimmu Ghaut and in the trenches before Delhi, thus warmly recommended, with almost his latest breath, to his chief, became aide-de-camp to that chief when he had risen to be Governor-General, was married to his eldest daughter, and received from him, only a few days before the end of his life, the sacred commission—which he has now handed on to me and I have, in my last chapter, attempted to discharge—of putting before the world exactly what Lord Lawrence had or had not proposed with regard to the abandonment of Peshawar.

The Siege Train arrived on September 4, and close behind it came the Jummoo troops and Wilde's regiment. And now John Lawrence had done all that he could do, and everything was ready for the last act of the great drama : everything, I would rather say, except the general in command.

The Siege Train arrived at Delhi yesterday (says John Lawrence, gleefully, to Bartle Frere). We ought to have Delhi in our possession within the next ten days. We should have it, did Nicholson command. . . . I hope to hear of our beginning the attack to-morrow with a salvo of thirty heavy guns at least. I feel sanguine of success, and that shortly. We cannot afford to delay.

A letter, of Nicholson's, written on September 7, takes us behind the scenes for a moment.

The Engineers have consulted me about the plan of attack, though Wilson has not. They tell me they proposed to him that I should be consulted, and that he maintained a chilling silence. I imagine it is, as I supposed, that he is afraid of being thought to be influenced by me. I care little, however, whether he receives my suggestions direct or through the Engineers. Like Barnard, he talks about the 'gambler's throw.' I think, however, we have a right to hope for success, and I trust that, ere another week passes, our flag will be flying from the Palace minarets. Wilson has told me that he intends to nominate me for Governor, for which I am obliged; though I had rather he had told me that he intended to give me command of the column of pursuit.

Before Delhi : August (September) 7, 1857.

It is significant that, in his excitement, Nicholson dates this and other letters written during the final bombardment 'August' instead of 'September.' The month of August must have passed slowly enough with a man of his impetuous temperament. But he had forgotten all about it now in the rapture of the approaching conflict.

I just write a line to confirm what you will have heard from Wilson. We break ground with No. 1, heavy battery, at six hundred and fifty yards to-night. Nos. 2 and 3 to-morrow night at five hundred and fifty and three hundred and fifty. Batter the 9th and go in on the 10th. I can't give you the plan of attack lest the letter should fall into other hands. Wilson's head is going. He says so himself, and it is quite evident that he speaks the truth. . . . Pandey is in very low spirits, and evidently thinks he has made a mistake.

But the eager excitement which caused Nicholson to be out by a month in his recollection of the past, made him also rather too sanguine, as the next letters show, in his calculations for the future.

Before Delhi : August (September) 9, 1857.

The batteries could not be got ready in time this morning, so we are only silencing the Moree to-day. To-morrow we breach and bombard, and assault on the 11th, which, by a strange coincidence, is the anniversary of our former capture. Many thanks for the Leia Commissionership. What did poor old Ross (the late Commissioner) die of? Your letter to Greathed has had the effect of brightening up both him and Metcalfe.

But, even now, Nicholson was too sanguine in his expectations. There was more delay, and on September 11

he wrote another letter to which a melancholy interest attaches—for it was the last that he wrote to his chief, and nearly the last that he wrote to anyone.

Before Delhi : September 11, 1857.

My dear Lawrence,—There has yet been another day's delay with the Batteries, but I do not see how there can possibly be another. The game is completely in our hands. We only want a player to move the pieces. Fortunately, after making all kinds of objections and obstructions, and even threatening more than once to withdraw the guns and abandon the attempt, Wilson has made everything over to the Engineers, and they, and they alone, will deserve the credit of taking Delhi. Had Wilson carried out his threat of withdrawing the guns, I was quite prepared to appeal to the army to set him aside and elect a successor! I have seen lots of useless generals in my day, but such an ignorant, croaking obstructive as he is, I have never, hitherto, met with, and nothing will induce me to serve a day under his personal command after the fall of this place. The purport of his last message in reply to the Engineers ran thus: 'I disagree with the Engineers entirely. I foresee great, if not insuperable, difficulties in the plan they propose. But, as I have no other plan myself, I yield to the urgent remonstrances of the Chief Engineer.' The above are almost the very words used by him, and yet he has, actually, never even examined the ground on which the Engineers proposed to erect the breaching batteries! I believe the Meerut catastrophe was more his fault than Hewitt's. And, by all accounts, he was driven into fighting at the Hindun, and could not help himself. The same may be said now. He is allowing the Engineers to undertake active operations simply because he knows the army will no longer put up with inactivity.

Yours very sincerely,  
J. NICHOLSON.

With this characteristically violent utterance Nicholson's 'pen-and-ink work,' the work which he so much disliked, ended. The work of his trusty sword remained. The news that he had been nominated, on Sir John Lawrence's recommendation, to the command of the city after it should be taken; that he had then been recommended by him for a post which he preferred even to the command of the city, the command of the Column of pursuit, and finally, when peaceful times should have returned, to the Commissionership of Leia, reached him in rapid succession, shortly before the assault, and must have convinced him, if he had ever really doubted it, of his Chief's enthusiastic appreciation of his services. 'I trust,' said Sir John Lawrence in the

last letter which he was ever to write to him (September 9), 'that you will be in Delhi when this reaches, and that you will escape the dangers of the assault and gain increased honour.' Nicholson was to gain 'increased honour,' but not by holding the Commissionership of Leia, or by governing the city which he had done so much to capture, or by leading the Column of pursuit.

The minuter details of the bombardment, the assault, and the capture of Delhi lie beyond my scope, and it must suffice to give a mere sketch of the crowning operations of a siege which, from first to last, in all its attendant circumstances, is almost unique in the history of modern war. The part of the wall selected for our attack was that which faced the Ridge, and which, extending from the river Jumna to the Lahore Gate, formed a third part of the whole circumference. It included the Moree, the Kashmere and the Water Bastions, each of which contained from ten to fourteen heavy guns; each was, in great part, our own handiwork, and each, during the last two months, had poured forth a storm of shot and shell upon their original constructors, without the intermission of a single day. The connecting wall between the bastions had not been constructed to carry heavy guns, but it was twenty-four feet high and twelve thick, and the labour of ten or twenty thousand hands, which could have been had at any time for the asking, might, in the space of a few days, have thrown up a rampart behind it, which, armed with a mere fraction of the guns the place contained, would have made the whole impregnable. Why had not the besieged done this long before, or why did they not attempt it even now? Had the Mutiny brought to the front a single military genius at Delhi, as it did when it was too late in other parts of India; had there been a General of even second-rate powers, who could have made the most of his appliances and inspired the troops with implicit confidence in him, the fall of the place must have been indefinitely postponed—postponed, at all events, till a regular investment and a regular siege were possible.

Outside the wall ran a ditch twenty-five feet wide and sixteen feet deep, which might well form the common grave of any force attempting to cross it before the parapets and bastions above should have been swept clear of its defenders,

The besiegers of a strongly fortified place ought, it has been laid down on high authority, to outnumber the besieged in the proportion of three to one. At Delhi, this proportion was reversed or more than reversed. The besieged army numbered at least 40,000 men; the besiegers, now that the last man had come from the Punjab, only 11,000. Of these, not more than 3,300 were Europeans, while the Jummoo contingent, 2,000 strong, had only just arrived in camp, and was regarded with suspicion and dislike by some of the authorities. Our heavy guns were only 54 in number, while those in Delhi amounted to 300. Of artillerymen we had only 580, and many even of these belonged to the Horse Artillery, and had to be called off from their proper duties to work in the batteries; while, to eke out their scanty numbers, it was found necessary to call for volunteers from the Lancers and the Carabineers, men who had never handled a gun before, and had to take their first lessons in artillery practice, exposed to constant fire from the enemy. A hard apprenticeship, but eagerly embraced and nobly discharged!

It was on the evening of September 7 that the ground was broken. On that night, under the personal direction of Alexander Taylor—a man whose antecedents no one of my readers is likely to have forgotten—the first battery was run up, seven hundred yards from the Moree Bastion. Animated and inspired by his presence, the men worked for their lives—for they knew what the day would bring forth. But, in spite of all their efforts, the first streak of light found the battery armed with only one gun, upon which, and upon each of its fellows, as, one after the other, they were brought into position, there rained down a pitiless fire from the opposing bastion. At last the battery was complete, and then the masonry of the fortifications of the city began to fly. It was a new and strange sensation. The time of patient waiting, of repelling attacks which were incessantly renewed, of Cadmean victories over a foe who seemed to possess unlimited powers of recovery and boundless recruiting grounds, was a thing of the past, and the time for reprisals had arrived.

During the five days and nights which followed, three other batteries were constructed under the same, or even

greater difficulties. One of them was only one hundred and sixty yards from the Water Bastion, and the heavy guns had to be dragged up to it, through the open, under a crushing fire of musketry; 'a feat of arms,' says Sir Henry Norman, 'almost unparalleled in war.'

With the deeds of skill, gallantry, endurance, and devotion which distinguished the six days of the bombardment, the names of Baird Smith, the Chief Engineer, who prepared all the plans, of Alexander Taylor, who superintended their execution and seemed to be everything and everywhere, of Brind and Tombs, of Campbell and Scott, who were in command of the respective batteries, will always be honourably bound up. The heat, the exposure, the unrest, the extremity of the peril, seemed only to lend them fresh strength for their work. On the 12th, all four batteries were able, for the first time, to play at once upon the walls of the city; and the first discharge of their concentrated fire must have made the most sanguine among the mutineers to feel that the game of mutiny had been all but played out. Fifty-four guns and mortars belched forth havoc on the doomed city; and ringing cheers arose from our men as the smoke of each salvo cleared away and showed the formidable bastions crumbling into ruins, and whole yards of the parapets torn away by the bursting shells, while the defenders were driven to seek shelter, if indeed they cared to find it, far into the interior of the city. Not for one moment, during the next forty-eight hours, did the whistling of bullets and the roar of artillery cease. The worn-out gunners—their places, meanwhile, being filled by volunteers—would, sometimes, throw themselves down to snatch a few moments of hurried, but profound, sleep beneath their very guns; and then, springing to their feet again, would pound away with redoubled vigour. The coolness and the courage of the old Sikh artillerymen, who had been picked out by Sir John Lawrence in person, and of the despised Muzbi Sikhs, whom he had also sent down to Delhi, were as conspicuous as that of the Europeans themselves. And the passive endurance of the water-carriers and native servants, who, amidst the hatreds of colour and of race which the fierce conflict had engendered, had not always received the best of treatment at their masters' hands, and

were now expected to wait on those same masters amidst storms of shot and shell, was, perhaps, more wonderful than either.

The enemy, though they had been driven down from the parapets, and though many of their guns on the bastions had been dismounted, still fought on with the courage of despair. They ran out light guns which enfiladed our batteries. They filled the water-courses and gardens in front of the city with sharpshooters who picked off our gunners at their work, and riddled the mantelets with bullet-holes. They even, on one occasion, attempted to attack us in the rear. And they began, when it was all too late, to raise a rampart behind the breaches, which would soon have made the place impregnable. On the night of the 13th, it seemed that the bombardment had pretty well done its work; and four young Engineer officers—Greathed, Home, Medley, and Lang—creeping down through the gardens, amongst and behind the enemy's skirmishers, descended into the ditch, examined the breaches, and returned with the report that they were difficult but practicable. The knowledge of what was going on behind the breaches led the General and his Council of War to decide that the enterprise should be attempted while 'practicable' it still remained. And forthwith the thrilling order, which had been so long and so eagerly expected, and which was to be the message of death to so many of the most eager of the expectants, flew from man to man throughout the camp:—'The assault at three o'clock this morning.' The plans had all been laid beforehand, and the three hours of suspense and preparation which remained passed away slowly enough.

Long before the hour struck our men were at Ludlow Castle, the appointed rendezvous, which, curiously enough, happened many years before to have been the residence of John Lawrence. The assaulting columns were four in number. The first, it had been arranged, was to storm the main breach of the Kashmere Bastion; the second, the Water Bastion; the third, when the Kashmere Gate should have been blown in by a small party, each man of whom carried his life and a powder-bag in his hand, was to enter by the opening thus made; while the fourth column, to the extreme right, was, first, to attempt to dislodge the



mutineers who were encamped in large numbers and in a strong position in the suburb of Kissengunge, and, then, to force an entrance by the Lahore Gate.

To Nicholson fell, as of right, the post of honour. He had been sent down by Sir John Lawrence with orders 'to take Delhi;' and Delhi the whole army was, willing that he, and no one else, should take. He was therefore to head the first column in person, as well as to direct the general operations of the assault. 'Our batteries,' says an eye-witness, 'redoubled their roar, while the columns were taking up their respective positions, throwing shells to drive the enemy away as far as possible from the breaches. The morning was just breaking; the thunder of our artillery was at its loudest, when, all at once, it hushed. Everyone could hear his heart beat.'

The Rifles now ran forward as skirmishers, to cover the advance of the assaulting columns; and the men, who had been lying on the ground to save their lives till they should be called for, sprang to their feet, and, with 'a cry of exultation,' began to move on rapidly for the walls. Beneath a storm of bullets from the besieged, who knew well that their hour had come, each of the first three columns did its work manfully and with success. They crossed the glacis with all speed and left it behind them dotted with writhing men. They leaped down into the ditch, and in it dead and dying soon lay thickly piled together. But the ladders were planted against the scarp, and in a few minutes the difficulties and dangers of the escalade were over. Nicholson, resolved to be the first in danger as in dignity, was amongst the foremost of his column to mount the breach. The second column, at the Water Bastion, forced its way in about the same time; and the third marched, almost unopposed, through the Kashmere gateway, which had been blown down by the small exploding party, but at the cost of the lives of almost all concerned. Soon the whole line of the ramparts which faced the Ridge, and had defied us for three weary months, was in our hands. The British flag was once more run up upon the Cabul Gate; and the bugle-call of the various regiments gave a breathing-space, in which men might congratulate each other on the victory, might count up the survivors, and might calculate and

grieve over the number of the dead. A ghastly tribute had, of course, been paid to the formidable nature of the defences and the unquestioned gallantry of the defenders.

The fourth column, under Major Reid, supported by the newly-arrived Kashmere Contingent under Richard Lawrence, had been less successful. With his faithful Ghoorikas, Reid had held Hindū Rao's house—the post of honour and of danger and the key to our whole position—throughout the siege, and had withstood some twenty-six attacks. But a too difficult—I would rather say an impossible—task had now been assigned to him. He was wounded early in the day, and his column was unable to dislodge the enemy, and so to approach the Lahore Gate. That important point was still held in force by the foe; and the fire of their Artillery, directed at the Cabul Gate, threatened to make our hard-won position there untenable. Nicholson and Jones had just met each other flushed with success, at the heads of their respective columns; and Nicholson, seeing that there was still good work to be done, determined to be the doer of it. He called for volunteers, and they appeared. But the one street by which they could approach the Lahore Gate was, like many streets in Eastern towns, so narrow that six men could hardly walk abreast along it. It had been barricaded by the watchful enemy. It was swept, from the other end, by a gun loaded with grape, and the windows and flat roofs of the houses on either side of it bristled with riflemen. What wonder, if from death in such manifold and such insidious forms even the stoutest hearts shrunk? Nicholson saw how things stood, and, knowing that if his force hesitated they were lost, sprang to the front, and, waving his sword over his head, as if he were a simple captain, called aloud upon his men to follow him. Had he been serving in the ranks in the open field, his noble stature would have marked him out as a target for the enemy's sharpshooters, and now his commanding presence and gestures, as he strode forward alone between the muzzles of an unseen foe, made escape impossible. There was death in every window and on every house-top; and the 'brute bullet' which did the deed was but one of many which must have found its way to that noble heart before he could have crossed swords with the foe. He

fell, mortally wounded, and with him, young as he was, and little known to fame as he had been, till the extremity of the peril brought him to the front and revealed him in his Titanic mould of heart and limb, there fell the man whom, perhaps, of all the heroes of the Mutiny—the Lawrence brothers alone excepted—India could, at that juncture, least afford to lose. He begged that he might be left lying on the ground till Delhi was ours. But this could not be, and he was borne off by his followers to his old quarters on the Ridge.

The long autumn day was over, and we were in Delhi. But Delhi was, by no means, ours. Sixty-six officers and eleven hundred men—nearly a third, that is, of the whole attacking force—had fallen; while, as yet, not a sixth part of the town was in our power. How many men, it might well be asked, would be left to us by the time that we had conquered the remainder? We held the line of ramparts which we had attacked and the portions of the city immediately adjoining, but nothing more. The Lahore Gate and the Magazine, the Jumma Musjid and the Palace, were still untouched, and were keeping up a heavy fire on our position. Worse than this, not a few of our troops had fallen victims to the temptation which, more formidable than themselves, our foes had left behind them, and were wallowing in a state of bestial intoxication. The enemy, meanwhile, had been able to maintain their position outside the town; and if only, at this supreme hour, a heaven-sent General had appeared amongst them, they might have attacked our camp, defended as it was mainly by the sick, and the maimed, and the halt, and, giving the *coup de grâce* to such bulwarks of our strength as Daly and Coke, Reid and Chamberlain, Showers and Seaton, who had been condemned to watch from the distance the terrible conflict, they might, once more, have been able to call the Ridge their own.

Never, perhaps, in the history of the Mutiny, were we in quite so perilous a position as on the night which followed our greatest military success. General Wilson, indeed, proposed, as might have been expected from a man in his enfeebled condition of mind and body, to withdraw the guns, to fall back on the camp and wait for reinforcements

there ; a step which, it is needless to point out, would have given us all the deadly work to do over again, even if our force should prove able to maintain itself on the Ridge till reinforcements came. But the urgent remonstrances of Baird Smith and others, by word of mouth ; of Chamberlain, by letter ; and, perhaps, also, the echoes which may have reached him from the tempest-tossed hero who lay chafing against his cruel destiny on his death-bed, and exclaimed in a wild paroxysm of passion, when he heard of the move which was in contemplation, ' Thank God, I have strength enough left to shoot that man,' turned the General once more from his purpose.

On the following day, the 15th, vast quantities of the intoxicating drinks, which had wrought such havoc amongst our men, were destroyed by General Wilson's order, and the streets literally ran with rivers of beer, and wine, and brandy. Meanwhile, the troops were sleeping off their drunken debauch ; and, on the 16th, active operations were resumed. On that day the Magazine was taken, and its vast stores of shot and shell, and of all the *matériel* of war, fell once more into the hands of their proper owners. By sapping gradually from house to house we managed, for three days more, to avoid the street-fighting which, once and again, has proved so demoralising to Englishmen ; and, slowly but surely, we pressed back the defenders into that ever-narrowing part of the city of which, fortunately for themselves, they still held the bolt-holes. Many of them had already begun, like rats, to quit the sinking vessel. And now the unarmed population of the city flocked in one continuous stream out of the open gates, hoping to save their lives, if nothing else, from our avenging swords. On the 19th, the Palace of the Moguls, which had witnessed the last expiring flicker of life in an effete dynasty, and the cruel murder of English men, and women, and children, fell into our hands ; and by Sunday, the 20th, the whole of the city—in large part already a city of the dead—was at our mercy.

But what of the King himself and the princes of the royal house ? They had slunk off to the tomb of Humayoun, a huge building, almost a city in itself, some miles from the modern Delhi, and there, swayed this way and that, now

by the bolder spirits of his army, who pressed him to put himself at their head and fight it out to the death, as became the descendant of Tamerlane and Baber ; now by the entreaties of his young wife, who was anxious chiefly for her own safety and that of her son, the heir of the Moguls ; and now, again, by the plausible suggestions of a double-dyed traitor of his own house who was in Hodson's pay, and who, approaching the head of his family with a kiss of peace, was endeavouring to detain him where he was till he could hand him over to his employer and receive the price of blood, the poor old monarch dozed or fooled away the few hours of his sovereignty which remained, the hours which might still make or mar him, in paroxysms of imbecile vacillation and despair.

The traitor gained the day, and Hodson, who could play the game of force as well as of fraud, and was an equal adept at either, learning from his craven-hearted tool that the King was prepared to surrender on promise of his life, went to Wilson and obtained leave, on that condition, to bring him into Delhi. The errand, with such a promise tacked on to it, was only half to Hodson's taste. 'If I get into the Palace,' he had written, in cool blood, some days before, 'the house of Timour will not be worth five minutes' purchase, I ween.' And it was owing to no feeling of compunction or compassion—for to such Hodson was a stranger—that he did not, like Pyrrhus, bury the sword which had hung by the side of Jehangir or Nadir Shah and had now dropped from the old man's hand, hilt-deep into the old man's heart, the moment he had him in his power. After two hours of bargaining for his own life and that of his queen and favourite son, the poor old Priam tottered forth and was taken back, in a bullock-cart, a prisoner, to his own city and palace, and was there handed over to the civil authorities.

But there were other members of the royal family, as Hodson knew well from his informants, also lurking in Humayoun's tomb. To have captured the King and lodged him as a prisoner in his own Palace was much. But to take his relations, and, when they were helpless in his power, to slay them with his own hand, would be better, still. The success of his first enterprise made General Wilson more

ready to trust him in this, and, whether from inadvertence, or because he thought that Hodson already knew his wishes, he omitted to stipulate that the lives of the Shahzadas should be spared, and that they too should be brought, free from injury and insult, into the city. With a hundred of his famous horse, Hodson started for Humayoun's tomb, and after three hours of negotiation, the three princes, two of them the sons, the other the grandson of the King, surrendered unconditionally into his hands. And if a tiger ever felt a pang of pity for the helpless prey beneath his talons, then, perhaps, Hodson would have been willing to restrain his impatience for the blood of his victims, fallen from so high an estate, till at least they had gone through the formalities of a drumhead court-martial. Then, but only then. Their arms were taken from them, and, escorted by some of his horsemen, they too were despatched in bullock-carts towards Delhi. With the rest of his horse, Hodson stayed behind to disarm the large and nerveless crowd, who, as sheep having no shepherd, and unable in their paralysed condition to see what the brute weight even of a flock of sheep might do by a sudden rush, were overawed by his resolute bearing.

This done, he galloped after his prey and caught them up just before the cavalcade reached the walls of Delhi. He ordered the princes roughly to get out of the cart and strip,—for even in his thirst for their blood, he had, as it would seem, an eye to the value of their outer clothes—he ordered them into the cart again, he seized a carbine from one of his troopers, and, then and there, with his own hand shot them down deliberately, one after the other. It was a stupid, cold-blooded, threefold murder. The princes were unresisting prisoners in his hands. No evidence worthy of the name had been or could have been given as to their participation in the slaughter of our countrymen. Their very identity depended solely on the unsupported testimony of that traitorous villain, the Mirza Elahee Buksh, who would have sworn away the life of his dearest friend if he had had aught to gain thereby. Had they been put upon their trial, disclosures of great importance as to the origin of the Mutiny could hardly fail to have been elicited. Their punishment would have been proportioned to their

offence, and would have been meted out to them with all the patient majesty of offended law.

While the last scenes of the great drama at Delhi were being played out and our troops were slowly pushing their way towards the Palace, the young hero whose indomitable will and stalwart arm had done more than that of anyone else upon the Ridge to prepare the way for our success, who had been among the first to stand upon the breach, and had thence been able to take somewhat more than a Pisgah view of the place towards which we had so long been toiling, lay slowly dying in an empty house within the camp. There was no solid ground for hope even from the first. The ball had entered his right side, had penetrated the lungs and passed out beneath the left arm. But men found it impossible not to cherish hope, while there was a spark of life—of so rare a life—remaining; and the electric wire which carried, each day, or twice each day, to the remotest corners of the Punjab news of the progress of the besiegers, chronicled also the fancied alternations and the all-too-certain progress of the ‘slow and silent and resistless sap’ which was going on in Nicholson’s sick-room. It is difficult to say which item of the message was scanned with the most heart-sickening anxiety at Lahore and at Peshawur.

‘He lay,’ says Hope Grant, who visited his dying bed, ‘like a noble oak riven asunder by a thunderbolt.’ He suffered terribly, but between the paroxysms of his pain he gasped out eager inquiries as to the progress of the siege, and even sent off a message to Sir John Lawrence, begging him by his own authority to supersede Wilson and appoint Chamberlain in his place! All that loving care could do to soothe so troubled and tempestuous a death-bed was done by Chamberlain and by Daly, and Nicholson lived on to hear that Delhi was completely in our power, and the King a prisoner. ‘My desire,’ he said to the native who brought with him the news, ‘was that Delhi should be taken before I die, and it has been granted.’ He lingered on till the 23rd, and then died a death which was, perhaps, more to be envied even than that of his friend and master Sir Henry Lawrence; for he died in the moment, not of extreme peril but of assured victory, a victory won in so large a measure by himself. He was buried on the following day in front

of the Kashmere Gate, and not far from the spot which had witnessed his last achievement.

'If there is ever a desperate deed to be done in India,' Herbert Edwardes had said to Lord Canning shortly before the Mutiny broke out, 'Nicholson is the man to do it; and, within six months, Hoti Murdan and Trimmu Ghaut, Nujuffgurh and Delhi, the narrow lane swept by grape and lined by a skulking foe, no less than 'the imminent deadly breach,' had proved that Herbert Edwardes was no false prophet. In vain did Nicholson, as he tossed feverishly on his death-bed, express a wish to press once more the hand of his friend. That could not be; for Edwardes had sterner duties on the Peshawur frontier. But his heart was in the sick chamber on the Ridge, and, with the aid of the telegraph, he might almost be said to be listening at its door and watching the life that was slowly ebbing away. When at length the message came, so long feared and so long expected, that all was over, he paid his last tribute to his friend in a striking epitaph, which, though it may seem to those who read it coolly at this distance of time and place, and who have no personal knowledge either of the man or of his deeds, to be too highly coloured, and though some of its statements are certainly open to question, does not, in the opinion of many who knew the man, do its subject more than justice. 'The feelings,' says Colonel Randall, 'with which I regard John Nicholson may have been at first engendered by the almost superhuman majesty of the man, acting on impressionable youth. But the impression was indelible, and neither the separation caused by his death nor by time has or can remove it. To me John Nicholson was and is the ideal of all that is noble, great, and true—a hero.' The epitaph, I would add, was intended not for the simple tomb before the Kashmere Gate—for no elaborate record of his achievements could be needed on the spot which had witnessed the last and most brilliant of them all—but for the far-off church at Lisburn in Ireland, where still lived the aged mother of the Nicholson brothers, one of whose sons had given a limb and the other his life in the final assault on Delhi.

How great had been the friction between two men endowed with such commanding powers and such strength of will as



John Lawrence and John Nicholson, the one of them armed with superior authority, the other often swayed by quite ungovernable restiveness, no reader of this biography will need to be reminded. It is more to my purpose to remark here that on no one, not even on the Fakirs, who worshipped him as their Guru, and who, when they heard that he was dead, determined, it is said, two of them to live no longer in the world which he had left, and a third, with truer instinct, to worship henceforward nothing but the God whom 'Nikkul Seyn' had worshipped—did the death of Nicholson produce so profound an impression as on his much-admiring chief, who, knowing the innate nobleness of the man, had determined, cost him what it might, to retain him in the Punjab so long as the Punjab seemed to give him the work for which he was best fitted, and had then with equal self-abnegation, determined, cost him what it might, to send him away from the Punjab, when still nobler work seemed to open out before him at Delhi.

When the news reached Lahore that Nicholson was dead—news which followed so fast on that of the fall of Delhi, the crowning achievement of John Lawrence's life—John Lawrence burst into tears, and, though it was never his way to wear his heart upon his sleeve or to use many words while the time still called for deeds, his grief for the dead and his warm appreciation of him found vent alike in his private letters and his public utterances. 'We have lost,' he says to Neville Chamberlain, 'many good and noble soldiers, but none of them to compare to John Nicholson. He was a glorious soldier; it is long before we shall look upon his like again.' 'General Nicholson's loss,' he says in his general order, 'is greatly to be deplored. . . . He possessed some of the highest qualities of a soldier. Brave, sagacious, and devoted to his profession, the Bengal Army contains no nobler and no abler soldier.' And in the Mutiny Report, written, not when his grief was fresh upon him, but after the crisis was over, when he was able to look back with the calmness of a spectator or a judge on all that had happened, he said deliberately, 'Brigadier-General John Nicholson is now beyond human praise and human reward. But so long as British rule shall endure in India, his fame can never perish. He seems especially to have been raised up for this

junction. He crowned a bright, though brief, career by dying of the wound he received in the moment of victory at Delhi. The Chief Commissioner does not hesitate to affirm that without John Nicholson Delhi could not have fallen.' And, perhaps, I may add here what has a special interest to myself, that throughout his subsequent life, as I hear from his friends, and not least during the last years of it, as I can say from vivid recollection, there was no one of his former Staff in the Punjab to whom Lord Lawrence was so fond of turning the conversation, no one whose deeds—even those which had given him most trouble at the time—he recounted, sometimes with so much amusement, always with such sympathy and admiration, as those of John Nicholson.

## CHAPTER XXI.

JOHN LAWRENCE AS A CONQUEROR.

SEPTEMBER 1857—FEBRUARY 1859.

DELHI did not fall a day too soon. For, early in September, risings took place in two very different parts of the Punjab, which showed to those who were not behind the scenes, or who were able to shut their eyes to the facts, what John Lawrence, with his fuller knowledge and his heavier responsibility, had never disguised from himself, that the chain had already been strained almost to snapping, and that the natives of the Punjab who had waited to give us time to win, fancying at length that we were about to lose, were prepared to join the winning side. One of these risings took place at Murri. The other and more formidable one in the wild jungles between Lahore and Mooltan. The first was comparatively unimportant; but it has a special interest for this biography, inasmuch as at Murri, which was guarded only by a handful of police, were Sir John Lawrence's wife and children, as well as a considerable number of European ladies.

Early in September, Hakim Khan, one of Lady Lawrence's personal attendants and a man of much influence with his tribe, warned her that unless Delhi fell within four days there would be a general rising in Huzara, that the Khurrals of that country and the Dhoonds of the hills near Rawul Pindi were already in league for the purpose, and that Murri with its almost defenceless inhabitants would be the first object of their attack. The warning did its work. Such precautions as were possible were taken. An attack made prematurely by night, by a portion of the Khurrals, three

hundred in number, men who were eager only for plunder and did not anticipate any resistance, was easily beaten off. The Dhoonds, when they came up next day, finding that the villages of their confederates were in flames, beat a hasty retreat, and reinforcements which were hurried up soon afterwards by Thornton from Rawul Pindi, and by Becher from Huzara, secured the safety of Murri and its inmates.

While this danger was being laid at Murri, a second and greater one was hatching in the jungles of Gogaira. Let us recall the exact position of Sir John Lawrence in the period immediately preceding the fall of Delhi, that we may better estimate the extent of the danger and the measures he took to meet it. There were still 19,000 Poorbeas in the Punjab, and of these not less than 5,800 retained their arms. To overawe this large army and to secure the whole country, there were exactly 3,620 Europeans and 12,740 Punjabis, 2,000 of these last being of Hindustani origin, and therefore suspected. Under these circumstances, Sir John Lawrence thought it his bounden duty to oppose all propositions from whomsoever they came, and however urgently they were pressed upon him, to raise any more native troops, till the atmosphere should have cleared.

How absolutely necessary this cautious policy was, was proved by the rising, on the very day of the assault on Delhi, of the wild tribes who inhabited the still wilder country lying between Mooltan and Lahore. This region, extending from the right bank of the Sutlej away to and beyond the Ravi, was inhabited by pastoral and almost nomadic races who cultivated little ground but owned large herds of cattle. It contained leagues upon leagues of low stunted brushwood, and almost pathless wastes of waving grass, which rose high above the heads of those who essayed to traverse it. It was the natural home of the cattle-breeder and the cattle-stealer. The Sikhs had lost two small armies in seeking to clear or penetrate it, and the English rule, though it had opened up some tracks through the bush, and had succeeded in checking the practices of the wild inhabitants, had not been able to eradicate them altogether. Sir John Lawrence himself had been disagreeably surprised in his visit to Mooltan, a few years before,

to find how many traces of the cattle-lifter his province still retained. And now the long delay in the capture of Delhi had, here too, produced its natural result. The prisoners who had escaped from the Agra jail flocked to this wild region as to their proper sanctuary, and by telling or foretelling to the credulous inhabitants the destruction of the English Raj, had persuaded them that 'the king of Delhi' was himself approaching!

On September 16, to the dismay of the authorities, no dawk arrived at Lahore from Mooltan, or at Mooltan from Lahore. In other words, the one channel of communication between the capital of the Punjab and the outer world was closed. The interruption was soon explained. For, late in the evening of that day, a messenger arrived in hot haste from Lieutenant Elphinstone at Gogaira, who told the Chief Commissioner, 'with a malicious twinkle of the eye,' that the Khurrals were in arms 10,000 strong, and were marching on Gogaira to plunder and burn it, by order, as they said, of 'the king of Delhi;' while the Khutties had stopped the Mooltan dawk, had appropriated the horses, and disarmed the road police.

There was not a man who could be well spared at that moment from Lahore. But the energy and determination of the Chief Commissioner, once more, shone brilliantly forth. The news reached him at 8 P.M., and he, at once, rode down to Mean Meer, to see what men he could best send. By twelve o'clock that night 200 of Wales' Cavalry were actually off, and, by three o'clock on the following morning, three guns, one company of European Infantry, one of Police Infantry, and fifty Police Horse were off after them, all starting under the eye and with the God-speed of the Chief Commissioner, and accompanied by his most trusted orderly, Sirdar Nihal Sing. The cavalry made the whole distance of eighty-three miles in one continuous march, and the rest of the force, following as best they could, arrived just an hour before the station of Gogaira was attacked; just in time, that is, to save it. They repelled the assailants and, next day, assuming the offensive, they killed Ahmed Khan, the chief of the Khurrals, and his son, burned the chief village, and took a number of prisoners.

But Sir John Lawrence was not more ready to put down rebellion with a strong hand than to enjoin moderation in punishing the offenders, and to redress any real or legitimate grievances. In a letter to Elphinstone, which accompanied the reinforcements, he says :—

I hear that the Khurals had been vexed by the police, that horses had been bought, by their interference, at lower figures than the owners liked, that others have been called on to serve who have no fancy for it, and the like. Now all this is bad ; wrong, morally and politically. I beg you will see to these matters at once. Of course, everything like insurrection must be put down with a strong hand. But all causes of complaint should be avoided, and where they have occurred, removed.

And again, ten days later, when the first success had been achieved :—

I am glad (he says) to hear of your success. You can try and punish capitally a few of the ringleaders. Don't hang too many. I would say not more than ten per cent., and less, if example below that proportion will suffice. Do not send back the Europeans and guns just now. Keep them until you serve out the chief offenders. Their presence will be useful. If Futteypore-Gogaira is, just now, unhealthy, encamp them in a suitable and healthy place. Act vigorously. Clear the country of rascals. Re-establish your road police, and make the tribe who destroyed the posts pay for the extra men necessary to occupy them securely. This will teach them to behave themselves in future. The whole of the monthly expense should be borne by them. . . . Let the Khutties off, but frighten them horribly.

The authorities at Mooltan, meanwhile, had been as prompt as those at Lahore ; and Crawford Chamberlain, rising from a sick bed, had pushed forward with a few of his trusty horse towards the point of danger ; and though he heard drums beating in all parts of the jungle, he met with no resistance. The enemy was everywhere to be heard ; nowhere to be seen. He reached the Serai of Chichawutni, and then, as though some Roderick Dhu had given ' the signal shrill ' to the lurking warriors of some new Clan Alpine, they all sprang to light and life.

With the help of a breastwork—resembling one which is better known to fame in Zululand, but is hardly perhaps more deserving of it—composed of the saddles of his troopers, of their tents and of their bedding, Crawford Chamberlain

managed, for five days, to keep the overwhelming numbers of his assailants at bay. In vain did the insurgents approach the chief native officer of his regiment, Birkut Ali, whose splendid fidelity had saved his master from death again and again at Mooltan, with offers of the Command in Chief of their army, if only he would join them and give up the five Feringhees who accompanied the force. 'If you wish to get at them,' replied Birkut Ali, 'you must do so over my dead body.'

At last, the simultaneous arrival of troops from Lahore and from Mooltan enabled Chamberlain to drive back the rebels into the jungles, and, henceforward, the difficulty was not so much to beat as to find them. It was the height of the rainy season. The vegetation was more than usually rank and malarious, and was much too wet to burn. Its secret passages were known to the enemy, unknown to us. Once fairly entangled in it, our men would not have easily found their way out again. On one occasion, a small party of horsemen, finding themselves, almost unawares, within it, drew together to consult as to their whereabouts. They had been talking for some minutes in a small circle when a child's cry was heard in their very midst. Amazed, they leapt off their horses, and beneath the tall matted grass, which stood as high as their heads, they found huddled together a whole party of panic-stricken native women and children. Happily for us, it was the only trace of the rebels which we found that day. Doubtless, the fathers and husbands were not far off; and it is hardly necessary to add that the terror of the wives and children was soon removed by the kindness of Chamberlain's rough troopers.

In a country so impracticable and impenetrable, it was obvious that the struggle might be prolonged for months. The rebellion was never formidable in itself—for the rebels were, many of them, armed only with clubs and stones and pitchforks—but, so long as the embers were smouldering, they might, at any time, be fanned into a flame which, spreading from doab to doab, might envelop the whole southern Punjab in a prairie-like conflagration. Hence the extreme anxiety of the Chief Commissioner, evidenced alike by his letters and his acts, to bring the struggle to an early termination. He called up contingents from Lahore, from Mooltan,

from Leia, from Jhung, and from Hissar, which soon began to close in on the districts occupied by the insurgents. Some important stations, such as Koti-Kumalia and Hurrippa, which had fallen into the hands of the rebels and had been sacked, were easily recovered. But it was not so easy to get at the offenders and to arrange for combined action between half-a-dozen officers separated from each other by leagues of trackless jungle.

At last, the rebels committed the mistake of concentrating their forces in a famous jungle stronghold called Julli. They were attacked by Hamilton on one side, and by Chamberlain on the other; and, seeing that the game was up, they bolted for the Sutlej and Bahawalpore. Chamberlain was unable to overtake them, and they had been provident enough to drive off their cattle, before the outbreak, into jungles, where they thought the English would never be able to find them. But the services of trackers were called in; and Chamberlain, after following the trail for many a long hour, had the satisfaction of bringing forth from their hiding-places fifteen hundred head of cattle, and thousands of sheep and goats! The proceeds of their sale paid most of the cost of the rising, and by the middle of November this troublesome business was at an end.

It must not be supposed that the insurrection which, for clearness' sake, I have here followed in outline from its beginning to its close, was the only or the chief cause of anxiety during the months which followed the fall of Delhi. In one essential particular, to which I shall presently have to refer in detail—the care of the city and the district in which it lay—Sir John Lawrence's anxiety was to be enormously increased. But, besides this, he had to provide for the return of some of his regiments to the Punjab, while he supplied their places with fresh and ever fresh reinforcements of cavalry, infantry, and police for the wider military operations which were going on in the North-West.

But the gravest cause of anxiety, during the period of which I am speaking, was the condition of the city and district which Sir John Lawrence had known and loved so well, which he had ruled with so much credit to himself and so much benefit to the inhabitants so many years before, and which now, in the strange and general overturning



of everything by the Mutiny, was soon again to become subject to him. How this came about requires explanation. Colvin, the able and conscientious—too conscientious, perhaps, for such times—Lieutenant-Governor of the North-West, to whose charge Delhi properly belonged, had, long since, been shut up in Agra, unable to communicate with the outer world, and on September 9, just, that is, before the assault on the Mogul capital was delivered, had died, worn out by disease of body and anxiety of mind. He had seen district after district reft away from him. He had heard of the slaughter of men, women, and children in his outlying stations, which he had been powerless to avert or to avenge. The times had been too hard for him. And now, after making several grave mistakes, he passed away amidst the unconcealed dislike and suspicion of many who, under more favourable circumstances, would have most liked and trusted him. It was a cruel fate, and Hervey Greathed, his Agent and representative in the camp at Delhi, a man who, in spite of Nicholson's hasty criticisms, had done excellent and well-appreciated service throughout the siege, followed him to a premature grave, a few days later, at the very moment of our final triumph.

Delhi was thus left without any civil ruler. Colonel Fraser, who succeeded Colvin as the Chief Commissioner of the North-West, was still cut off from the Mogul capital by a broad belt of insurrection. And so, by the general acclamation of soldiers and civilians, not less than by the express request of General Wilson and by the unmistakable fitness of things, it was 'instinctively' arranged that the civil charge of the conquered city, with all the vast interests and difficulties connected with it, should, as soon as matters had quieted down, fall once more into the hands of the man whom all alike recognised as the most fit for the task. It was no enviable duty. Could Sir John Lawrence have gone down to Delhi at once, in possession of the 'full powers' for which he had so often asked in vain, and could he have been free to give his whole time and energies to the task, doubtless, in the general confusion that prevailed, many things would still have been done which had better have remained undone, and some few things, even with his energy, must have remained undone which would have been better

for the doing ; but it is easy to see how much spirit would have been infused into the military operations, how much property would have been saved, how many innocent lives spared. Unfortunately this could not be. His hands were full to overflowing in his own province. Moreover, situated as Delhi then was, amidst a hostile and predatory population, while large bands of mutineers were still in the neighbourhood, and while the military interests which depended on our holding the place, now that we had retaken it, were so vital, martial law was, perhaps, a necessity—a horrible necessity certainly, but still a necessity. If, as the Duke of Wellington observed, there is only one thing which is more terrible than victory, and that is defeat, we may surely say with equal truth, that to govern Delhi, its conquerors and its conquered, under the circumstances in which it fell into our hands, was only less difficult and less distressing than to have faced a repulse from before its walls. Happily, the Military Governor appointed by General Wilson to bridge over the interval was Colonel Henry Pelham Burn, a man whom Sir John Lawrence knew well, and liked much, and whose influence, so far as it extended, would certainly be on the side of moderation and of humanity ; while Greathed's post fell to Charles Saunders, an old Punjabi magistrate, a friend of both the Lawrences, and a man who was equally averse to all unnecessary bloodshed. To repress disorder, to bring the guilty few to justice, and to protect the innocent or pardonable masses was the object of both Pelham Burn and Saunders throughout. But to enforce their views on others, and, in the excited state in which men's minds then were, to prevent outrages of every description upon person and property, was difficult or impossible.

The condition of the victorious army, composed as it was of men of various races and religions—the Europeans forming only a small fraction of the whole—was much what might have been expected. The bonds of discipline had been relaxed during the long tension of the siege. The men had dared and suffered much, and they had now burst into the doomed city athirst for drink, for plunder, and for revenge. No quarter was given to the Sepoys who had been untrue to their salt, and who, in the logic of conquerors,

might be regarded as all equally guilty of the blood of English women and children. But of these, a large portion, after disputing bravely our advance towards the Palace, had preferred to escape in armed bodies, and so to prolong the war elsewhere, rather than be slaughtered like rats in a hole. A large part of the population had also—happily for us and for themselves—flocked out of the city as we entered it. The worst horrors, therefore, of the most horrible of human, or inhuman, spectacles—when, that is, a city, which has been taken by storm, is given over, with its helpless inhabitants, to the mercies of a merciless soldiery—were absent. It fared ill indeed with those few natives who, trusting to their friendly feelings towards us or wearied out with the sufferings which they had undergone at the hands of their own countrymen, thought more of saving their houses or the remnant of their property than their lives. Few of these escaped. But, thanks to the orders of General Wilson and the chivalrous exertions of the English officers, the women and children were treated mercifully, and, as far as could be, were passed on, uninjured, out of the city.

The danger which had threatened the very existence of our army on the day after the assault had been lessened by General Wilson's order that all wine and spirits should be at once destroyed. But a more potent incentive to active exertion on the part of the conquerors was now to be found in their wild desire for plunder. 'Loot' is a word of Eastern origin, and for a couple of centuries past—ever since, that is, the cruel murder of one of their Gurus by the Mogul emperor—the looting of Delhi had been the day-dream of the most patriotic among the Sikh race. Delhi contained, they knew well, vast quantities of costly furniture, of jewellery, of plate, and of money; and if three days for looting had not been allowed them by the authorities, they would, probably, have taken it for themselves. In order to put some restraint upon the predatory instincts of individuals, Prize Agents were appointed, selected by the soldiers themselves, whose business it would be, at the end of the three days, to collect what was left, to sell it for what it would fetch, and divide the proceeds fairly among the men. But little was the all that the Prize Agents did, or cared to do. With the Sikhs

and other Punjabi races, looting had been raised to the dignity of a fine art, and it was not likely that they would use their professional knowledge for the benefit of mere bunglers. Like hounds drawing a cover, they took street by street, and, entering one deserted house after another, tapped each wall or panel with the delicate touch of an artist, poured water over the floors, observing where it sank through fastest, and then, as though they had been gifted with the eye of the eagle, the ear of the Red Indian, or the nose of the bloodhound, cut their way straight through to the cranny or the cupboard, or the underground jars which contained the savings of a lifetime or of generations. Happily, it was a city of the dead which they were plundering. They saw no living thing to remind them of the luckless inhabitants except a number of cats, which, with their strange local fidelity, clung, to the end, to the homes which their owners had abandoned, or crept wonderingly from house to house, searching for them in vain. The shattered buildings; the putrefying or half-devoured corpses; the splendid pieces of furniture which would not pay for removal ruthlessly broken to pieces or thrown out into the roads; the helpless and, at least, half-innocent population who were perishing in the surrounding villages—altogether went to form a scene which, as we look back upon it in cooler blood, might well, we think, have moved a heart of stone.

Efforts were made by Pelham Burn, Chamberlain, Saunders, and others to save from the general wreck certain streets belonging to the wealthier inhabitants, who were known to have been friendly to us, and who had already suffered enough in the depredations to which they had been exposed at the hands of their own countrymen, during the short-lived resurrection of the Mogul monarchy. But their exertions were crowned with very little success. Hodson and his troopers outdoing all the rest in the race for plunder, as they had outdone them before in point of enterprise and valour, were not to be restrained by any sentiment of moderation or of humanity. Hodson's camp contained a miscellaneous collection of animals and vehicles which could not have been got together without his sanction; and Hodson himself, as everybody knew well, was not backward in appropriating himself more portable and more valuable spoils, samples

of which were seen by those whose painful duty it was to open his boxes after he had met his death at Lucknow.

But the sight which must have appealed most vividly to the historic imagination was the Palace itself, the Palace which recalled the memories of some of the most splendid of Eastern sovereigns ; which, more recently, had been allowed, even under English influence, to remain the chartered seat of so many debaucheries and villainies ; and, in more recent days still, had been stained with the blood of so many English women and children. It was a scene which must have recalled to some at least of those who witnessed it the moving description, in the second *Æneid*, of the fall of the city, the palace, and the last king of Troy. There, was the great gateway of the Palace burst open by the besiegers. There, the noble galleries and the stately privacy of the last of a long line of kings exposed to the vulgar view, and armed men, but not its natural guardians, crowding on the sacred threshold. And there, once more, was the poor old king, the helpless bauble or puppet of the mutineers, ejected from his palace, confined to a single room, about to be tried for his life, and exposed to the scoffs and insults of officers and soldiers ; while, round about him were his Queen and the Princesses of the royal house, huddling together, like Hecuba and her daughters, in vain attempting to hide themselves from the wanton gaze—which to an Eastern lady is a worse shame than death—of the curious or the cruel. Happiest, or least unhappy, of that miserable crew was the old King himself, who, in his

Second childishness and mere oblivion,  
Sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything,

seemed almost unconscious of his misery and his shame.

What part, so far as his influence could, as yet, make itself felt at Delhi, Sir John Lawrence was likely to take on these and similar questions, few who have followed his biography thus far will have much difficulty in conjecturing. Some of the questions raised by our reconquest of the town and district were delicate and difficult enough. But there were others on which, with his strong and vigorous sense of justice, he was likely to give no uncertain sound.

To begin with, there were the Shahzadas, or members of the royal family. A large number, not less than twenty-nine, of these Princes had been picked up, lurking in the neighbourhood of the city, and there were not wanting those who were anxious to deal with them in the short and Hodsonian method. 'No,' said Sir John Lawrence—such is the general upshot of all his letters—'try them fairly, and if they are found guilty of having authorised or abetted the massacre of English women or children, by all means condemn them to death. But deal with no one as Hodson dealt with his victims.' Then, there were the Rajas or Nawabs of districts like Jhujjur and Bullubghur, men who had sworn allegiance to the English crown, and some of whom owed all that they possessed to English patronage, but who had either stood ostentatiously aloof from us in the hour of our need, or had actually taken part against us. Here, again, Sir John Lawrence was for even-handed justice; nothing less, but nothing more. 'Reduce them to submission,' he said, 'by such a show of military force as will save all necessary bloodshed; promise them a fair trial, and, if found guilty, deal with each according to the merits of his case.' Then, there was the starving and, in great part, innocent population of the city, whom we had driven from their homes, and whom, whilst many of the authorities were for leaving where they were, to live or die, Sir John Lawrence was for bringing back, as soon as possible, under proper precautions, into the city, and, when there, for protecting from the brutal passions which the conflict had aroused.

The merciful policy which Sir John Lawrence was eager, informally, to recommend to the authorities at Delhi, he was not backward in pressing on the Supreme Government, officially. As early as October 9, he writes thus to Lord Canning:—

The Chief Commissioner thinks that it would be sound policy to allow the inhabitants to return. Delhi has long been the *entrepôt* of a great trade, and a place of much social and political importance. Its possession would, in every point of view, prove more useful to us than its destruction. However guilty some of its inhabitants may have been, it cannot be denied, the Chief Commissioner believes, by any impartial person that the majority were not connected with the insurrection, and

that a large section would even have sided with us, had they had the power. They were, however, as is well known, in the hands of a merciless and lawless soldiery. They have suffered prodigiously; and it would appear, therefore, good policy to allow those who have survived to return to their homes.

But the remonstrances of Sir John Lawrence were not to be attended to just yet. He had no authority to act. He could only advise. Things indeed at Delhi were in an altogether abnormal condition. The city was, nominally, as I have shown, under control of a Military Governor, Colonel Pelham Burn. A Military Commission was sitting to try all persons accused of rebellion, and their sentences were executed forthwith by a Provost-Marshal. But, as though this was not enough for the purposes of justice or repression, Special Commissioners, 'with full powers of life and death vested in each one of them,' had also been appointed by the Supreme Government.

In early days, indeed, while the blood of the victors was still at fever heat, there is reason to fear that such deeds reflected, only too faithfully, the feelings of many Europeans alike in the city and at a distance. Charles Saunders, who put no one to death himself, who treated the imbecile king and his son with something of the compassion due to fallen greatness and extremes of youth and age, and, to his lasting credit, was rebuked, by the fiery spirits who surrounded him, for his 'ill-timed leniency,' was unable to put any check upon them. A four-square gallows was erected in a public place at Delhi, which soon became a fashionable lounge. A knowing native shopkeeper arranged chairs in front of his shop, and, on these, English officers would smoke their cigars and, for the payment of a small sum, look on at the death agonies of the men who dangled in groups from all four cross-beams at once, and whose bodies were soon deftly dropped, one on the top of another, into a cart beneath, to make room for fresh victims. On one occasion, a batch of ten or a dozen men were brought before the Commission. There was no direct evidence against them, but it was remarked that they looked like soldiers, or as if they had, at one time, borne arms; and that was enough. They were soon all hanging from the gallows.

Pudet hæc opprobria nobis  
Et dici potuisse et non potuisse refelli.

These things were not known at Lahore, in their full enormity, till a later period, and it is pleasant to record that those whom John Lawrence, in one of his earlier letters half humorously calls 'the desperadoes' there; those who were most delighted at the first reports of 'the energy' that was being shown; those who had been loudest for desecrating the Mosque or even destroying the town, were forward enough, when the full truth was known, to condemn the acts of revenge which continued to signalise and to disgrace our rule for *full four months* after the city had fallen into our hands and all resistance had ceased.

It has been said by some of those who were, more or less, concerned in these acts, and upon whom Sir John Lawrence's censures fell most heavily, that he only protested against them when he found it convenient to do so; when, that is, public opinion in England had already declared itself against further bloodshed, and had had time to make itself felt in India; in fact, that he swam with the stream, was for indiscriminate vengeance when it was the order of the day, and was for clemency only when the voice of outraged humanity called aloud for it! How far this was from being the case, the letters which begin from within a few days only after the fall of Delhi sufficiently show; and I now proceed to give others to the same effect, all of them written at a time when, as yet, few dared to speak of moderation or of mercy. It was indeed only very gradually that he got to know the full truth of what was going on at Delhi; for he was the last man to whom anyone who was implicated would be likely to report of his doings. 'It is too bad,' he says to Saunders on October 23, 'the way that the troops are allowed to plunder. They will ere long, if it continue, degenerate into a mere rabble.'

A few days later, he writes thus to Hugh Fraser, Chief Commissioner of the North-West Provinces:—

As regards the city and fort of Delhi, I wrote until I was tired. I would have taken all the guns from the ramparts of the town, planted as many as I could on the Palace, so as to overawe the town, and let back all the peaceable folks. I should be happy, in case of necessity,



to do all that was required with a thousand men at my back at Delhi. Many thanks for your kind expressions. I feel that I only did my duty, and many have done theirs equally well.

As regards the doings of the Prize Agents which had been reported to him by Colonel Pelham Burn with many expressions of horror and disgust, he writes back :—

I think that you should go over and tell Chamberlain what you have written to me about the Prize Agents' misconduct at Delhi. If you do not like moving in the matter, and see no objection to my doing so, I will. I think such acts as you relate reflect disgrace on our national character, and should be put a stop to.

Some of his friends wrote to him, as I have already mentioned, expressing their earnest hope that he would 'plough up Delhi'; others, that he would at least destroy the great Mosque. In reply to the latter proposal, he writes to Pelham Burn, who had consulted him in the matter: 'I will on no account consent to it. We should carefully abstain from the destruction of religious edifices, either to favour friends or to annoy foes.' And when some of the chief authorities in his province, and many of them his intimate friends, came in solemn deputation to him to urge the same step, and pointed out, as a convincing argument, that to destroy the finest place of Muslim worship in the world, would be felt as a blow to their religion by Muslims everywhere, he first reasoned out the matter calmly with them. But finding that he could produce no effect, he jumped up from his seat, and slapping one of them on his back, said, 'I'll tell you what it is. There are many things you could persuade me to do, but you shall never persuade me to do this. So you may as well spare your pains.'

Hodson had given guarantees for their lives to some of the greatest criminals in Delhi. Sir John Lawrence was asked by Saunders whether these promises should be respected or not. He replied, as he always did in similar cases, that faith must be kept whatever it cost us. 'As regards Hodson's guarantees, I think they must be respected, no matter under what influence they were given. He was allowed great power by the Commander-in-Chief and his successors, and if he abused it, this is between him and his conscience,

and between him and Government. . . . I heard a rumour that the Bullubghur Raja is half-witted. If this be the case the Commission should be duly informed ; we should not hang beings who are not able to take care of themselves.'

Finding that things did not improve as fast as he could wish, he set out for Delhi himself as soon as it was safe to leave the Punjab, with the express purpose of putting a stop, if possible, to further bloodshed and spoliation. He left Ferozepore on January 30, 1858, and, after passing through Loodiana and Umballa, and holding interviews with his lieutenants and with the protected chiefs who had done us such admirable service, reached Delhi on February 24. His first act was to call together all the chief officials of the place. Charles Saunders, Philip Egerton, Neville Chamberlain, and others were present at the meeting. Sir John Lawrence spoke temperately regarding the proceedings of the Special Commissioners ; admitted that, at first, exceptional circumstances might have justified exceptional measures of repression ; but pointed out that, at any rate, the time for such measures had long since passed, and that what was wanted now was to restore peace and confidence to the people. At the same time, he telegraphed to Lord Canning, asking for leave to withdraw at once the power of life and death from individuals, some of whom had so terribly abused it, and to appoint instead a mixed Commission of civil and military officers, who were to try cases of rebellion, and not put anyone to death without the sanction of Government. 'I have arranged,' he says in a letter to Lord Canning, 'for a Commission of three officers for the trial of insurgents and mutineers, as the system of allowing every judicial officer to sentence to death did not work well.' At the same time, he endeavoured to strike at the root of the mischief, by getting one of the chief offenders removed to some other part of the country, where he would be less in the way of temptation.

At Delhi, Sir John Lawrence was joined, much to his relief of mind, by his Secretary, Richard Temple, who had been absent on furlough throughout the crisis, and, on landing in Calcutta on his return from England, had managed, with characteristic energy, to make his way at once to his chief across a country which was still overrun

by mutineers. 'Little Temple has arrived,' says Sir John, 'looking very jolly, and talking immensely.' And in conversation with myself, some twenty-three years later, Sir Richard Temple has fully confirmed the impression which I have derived from the sum total of the correspondence before me, and from the narratives of eye-witnesses, as to the deplorable condition of the inhabitants of the city, full five months after it had fallen into our hands. 'The town,' he said, 'was perfectly quiet and orderly. There was no cause for alarm. But the work of plunder and bloodshed was still going on. The people wore a *hunted* look, and were still being arrested in large numbers, and many of them hanged or put in irons.' Sir John Lawrence, hoping that he had put a final stop to all this, left Delhi for an adjoining district, where there was much to be done. But overhearing some young officers, who were out shooting, congratulating each other, *more suo*, that 'a good stiff rule' was still going on in the city, and that a Goojur prisoner, who had been sentenced to death before his arrival, had been executed, inadvertently or not, in defiance of his orders, as soon as his back was turned, he went back in high wrath to Delhi, and gave what I believe to have been the severest reprimand ever given by him. 'Write,' he said to his Secretary, 'a severe despatch, condemning what has been done.' Temple did as he was told. 'Write it much more strongly,' said Sir John, and the result, probably, gave adequate expression to his feelings on the subject. In vain, soon afterwards, as the Chief Commissioner and his Secretary were driving out in a buggy, did the Magistrate of the city ride up to him and press strongly that some of the expressions might be modified. 'No,' said Sir John, 'there is not a word of it I will alter. It is not half strong enough.'

The reign of terror was now over, and Sir John Lawrence, after making proper arrangements with the General in command for the protection of the Palace and the bridge of boats, for the levelling of some of the fortifications, for the readmission of the still excluded Mohammedan population, and—more important still—for their protection when they should have been readmitted, left, in the third week of March, the city which he had done so much to

recapture and so much to save. That the mosques of Delhi were not desecrated; that the inhabitants were not left to shift for themselves as homeless outcasts; that the whole city, with its glorious buildings and its historic memories, was not levelled with the ground, and the plough driven over its site; in one word, that the lasting shame emblazoned in letters of blood and fire in the annals of Imperial Rome, by her ruthless destruction of Carthage and of Corinth, is not written in equally indelible characters in the annals of English rule in India, was due, in great part at least, to the justice and the humanity, the statesmanship and the Christian spirit of John Lawrence. 'Should not I spare?'—so in words of high and sacred precedent he might have met the fiery spirits who surrounded him, and who would, some of them, certainly have ranged themselves on the side of the angry Hebrew prophet rather than of the repentant or innocent people. 'Should not I spare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than six score thousand persons who cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand, and also much cattle?'

It will readily be believed that the humane views of Sir John Lawrence, which I have endeavoured to set forth, were cordially shared by the highest authorities in India and in England—in India, by Lord Elphinstone and Lord Canning; in England, by the Queen herself. But it may be well to quote here, as the most authoritative condemnation of the past, and as an omen of brighter things for the future, a few words from the Queen and Lord Canning.

Lord Canning, in writing to the Queen, on September 25, 1857, says:—

There is a rabid and indiscriminate vindictiveness abroad, even amongst many who ought to set a better example, which it is impossible to contemplate without a feeling of shame for one's countrymen. Not one man in ten seems to think that the hanging and shooting of forty to fifty thousand mutineers, besides other rebels, can be otherwise than practicable and right. Nor does it occur to those who talk and write most upon the matter, that for the Sovereign of England to hold and govern India without employing, and to a great extent trusting, natives, both in civil and military service, is simply impossible. . . . To those whose hearts have been torn by the foul barbarities inflicted on those dear to them, any degree of bitterness against the natives may be excused. No man will dare to judge them for it. But the cry is raised

loudest by those who have been sitting quietly in their houses from the beginning and have suffered little from the convulsions around them, unless it be in pocket. It is to be feared that the feeling of exasperation will be a great impediment in the way of restoring tranquillity and good order, even after signal retribution shall have been deliberately measured out to all the chief offenders.

Such words, uttered by one who had so worthily represented the Queen throughout, were sure to obtain a warm response from her.

Lord Canning (she writes) will easily believe how entirely the Queen shares his feelings of sorrow and indignation at the un-Christian spirit shown, alas! also, to a great extent, here by the public towards India in general, and towards Sepoys *without discrimination*. It is, however, not likely to last. . . . To the nation at large, to the peaceable inhabitants, to the many kind and friendly natives who have assisted us, sheltered the fugitives, and been faithful and true, there should be shown the greatest kindness. They should know that there is no hatred to a brown skin, none; but the greatest wish on the Queen's part to see them happy, contented, and flourishing.\*

In the midst of Sir John Lawrence's anxieties on this and other subjects, there had been one brief interlude of family life and enjoyment, which must not be altogether omitted from my narrative. His intimate friends knew well how much his anxiety had been increased during the early part of the Mutiny by his separation from his wife. Doubtless, he might have summoned her to his side at any moment in case of necessity, and there was consolation to each in the thought. But there were many other English ladies living at Murri, certainly in greater comfort, and, possibly, in greater safety than could have been the case if they were living in the plains; and the Chief Commissioner, feeling that 'nobility imposes obligation,' determined not to set an example which might be imitated by others, and might even cause a panic similar to that which had taken place at Simla, at the outbreak of the Mutiny.

But now the extremity of the danger was over, and the cool season had come. So, on November 4, he started to meet his wife at Jhelum, in her descent towards the plains; and, once more, on November 9, I recognise in the folio

\* *Life of the Prince Consort*, vol. iv. pp. 146-147.

volumes of letters the familiar handwriting, which had seldom long been absent from them till the Mutiny broke out. But the interval of domestic happiness was all too short. 'Harrie and the babes,' says Sir John Lawrence to his brother George, who, as Resident in Rajpootana, was weathering the storm with his wonted courage and resolution, 'are to leave Mooltan by a steamer on December 26. I shall go so far with her. I had intended going home in April, for a year, on sick certificate, as my eyes are ailing and require rest and advice; but this is now out of the question. I feel bound to stay for another year until all be restored to order.'

At Kurrachi, Lady Lawrence was hospitably entertained in the house of Bartle Frere, the Chief Commissioner of Scinde, who had been working so cordially with her husband for the common cause; while Sir John Lawrence, broken down in health as he was, and yearning for repose as he had been for two years past, returned to Lahore, determined not to leave his province till he had done all that he could, not only to put everything in perfect order within it, but to reinforce the new Commander-in-Chief for the great campaign which was about to open in the North-West.

## CHAPTER XXII.

JOHN LAWRENCE AS A PACIFICATOR.

SEPTEMBER 1857-JULY 1858.

WHEN the news of the death of General Anson and of the rapid spread of the Mutiny throughout the whole of the Bengal army reached England, early in July, the Ministers, who, up to that time, had been inclined to doubt the extent and the extremity of the peril, woke up, partially at least, to its reality. The Queen and Prince Albert, as is now well known, had taken a truer view from the beginning, and had not failed to urge it upon the Government in a series of admirable and stirring communications.\* Much larger reinforcements were hurried out with all speed, and Sir Colin Campbell was offered the chief command of the Indian Army. 'When will you be ready to start?' said Lord Palmerston as he made the offer. 'To-morrow,' replied the fine old soldier, and, on the morrow, July 12, he was actually off, saying that he would get his outfit in Calcutta.

The appointment of Sir Colin brought Sir John Lawrence, in spite of all intervening obstacles, into close communication with Head-quarters. The two men were old and tried friends, and the troops, the arms, and the counsel with which the Chief Commissioner of the Punjab had so unstintingly supplied successive commanders of the Delhi Field Force, were now to be as freely sought by Sir Colin Campbell as they were to be freely given by Sir John Lawrence, towards the completion of the great works that were in hand; the relief of Lucknow, the reconquest of Oude, of Rohilkund and of the Gangetic Doab, and, more important still, the ultimate

\* *Life of the Prince Consort*, vol. iv. pp. 73-74; 77-82; 88; 90-92; 124-128, etc.

reconstruction of the Bengal army and the reorganization of the whole system of the government of India.

"From the moment that Delhi fell, Lucknow took its place, as the Head-quarters of the Mutiny, as the centre of interest, to which all eyes were, for many months to come, to turn with so much anxiety and so much pride. And it will be necessary, if we are to understand the policy recommended by Sir John Lawrence with respect to it, to glance, very briefly, at the vicissitudes of the siege, its successive reliefs and beleaguements. The 'relief of the Residency' on September 25, 1857, was the last and most splendid of the long series of successes won by Havelock, and it will also be for ever memorable for the noble self-abnegation of Sir James Outram. But, in reality, it was no 'relief' at all. The small garrison of 927 Europeans and 765 natives had, each one of them,—as though they were all inspired by the last words of their beloved chief, Sir Henry Lawrence, —'tried to do his duty,' during a siege of twelve weeks, exposed to sufferings of which, as Tennyson has truly told us in his stirring ballad, the hard fighting was the least.

Men will forget what we suffer and not what we do. We can fight.  
 But to be soldier all day and be sentinel all through the night—  
 Ever the mine and assault, our sallies, their lying alarms,  
 Bugles and drums in the darkness, and shoutings and soundings to  
 arms,  
 Ever the labour of fifty that had to be done by five,  
 Ever the marvel among us that one should be left alive,  
 Ever the day with its traitorous death from the loopholes around,  
 Ever the night with its coffinless corpse to be laid in the ground,  
 Heat like the mouth of a hell, or a deluge of cataract skies,  
 Stench of old offal decaying and infinite torment of flies,  
 Thoughts of the breezes of May blowing over an English field,  
 Cholera, scurvy, and fever, the wound that *would* not be healed.  
 Lopping away of the limb by the pitiful-pitiless knife—  
 Torture and trouble in vain—for it never could save us a life.  
 Valour of delicate women who tended the hospital bed,  
 Horror of women in travail among the dying and dead,  
 Grief for our perishing children, and never a moment for grief.  
 Toil and ineffable weariness, faltering hopes of relief,  
 Havelock baffled, or beaten, or butchered for all that we knew.  
 Then day and night, day and night, coming down on the still shatter'd  
 walls,  
 Millions of musket bullets, and thousands of cannon balls.  
 But ever upon the topmost roof our banner of England blew.



But now Havelock and Outram had come at last ; and the garrison straightway found themselves—Havelock and Outram and all—hemmed in as closely as ever by the vastly superior numbers of the enemy and by the seething population of the city. The garrison was, in fact, reinforced rather than relieved. They had double the number of mouths to feed and no more food with which to do it.

At last, Sir Colin Campbell was able to start from Calcutta, and arriving at Cawnpore on November 4, he put himself at the head of the miscellaneous force of four thousand men which he had managed, by immense exertions, to collect, and, a few days afterwards, was off again for Lucknow, fought his way against desperate odds, and, on the 17th, the four generals—Inglis, Havelock, Outram, and Colin Campbell—had their famous meeting, immortalised by painter and poet, in the long beleaguered Residency. The siege was, at last, over ; and the civilians, women and children—such of them as survived—were carried off in safety to Cawnpore, and thence despatched to Allahabad.

Thus a second great episode in the Mutiny had, to all appearance, ended in our favour. But it was still in appearance only. For Sir Colin Campbell, unable, as he believed, with his small and much diminished force, to conquer or keep the vast city, determined to abandon the Residency, and, leaving Outram and Havelock to hold the Alum Bagh, to fall back himself upon Cawnpore. But Havelock's last victory had been won. He was on his death-bed, dying of dysentery, and Lucknow is thus the resting-place of two of the foremost heroes of the Mutiny. The Alum Bagh contains the grave of the stern Puritan soldier, Sir Henry Havelock. The Residency will remain an object of almost religious veneration so long as English rule in India lasts, partly because of the heroic memories of the siege which cluster so thickly round it, but still more, because it contains the grave of Sir Henry Lawrence.

The withdrawal of Sir Colin Campbell from Lucknow was a confession of weakness ; but it was a confession of weakness made by a good soldier and a prudent man. The disasters which, in his absence, had befallen Wyndham at Cawnpore he instantly retrieved. He recovered Futttehguhr and Furruckabad, and, with hardly any loss to his

force, defeated the enemy in several engagements. 'The news of the day' (December 21), says John Lawrence, writing in excellent spirits, which were not usual with him at this period, 'is the best that we have received since the fall of Delhi. We have now beaten and dispersed the last body of the mutineers which had not yet met us, and have taken forty-eight guns—that is, thirty-seven at Cawnpore and its vicinity, and eleven near Futtehguhr; and all this with scarce any loss to ourselves!'

On the fourteenth of that same December, a pressing appeal for Cavalry, written in Greek characters, the most common form of cypher despatch in those days, had reached Sir John Lawrence from General Mansfield. And this is how he answered it:—

Camp, Mooltan Road: December 16, 1857.

My dear Mansfield,—I received your letter calling for Cavalry two days ago, just as I was starting for Mooltan. I have arranged with General Penny to send down the Head-quarters of the 1st Sikh Cavalry from Delhi, about four hundred and thirty sabres. I will do all I can to supply their place at once, and have ordered off two troops of a new corps now being raised at Lahore. I hope also to complete this corps within another month, or nearly so. The remainder of the 1st Sikh Cavalry must, by this time, be near Kurnal, and should follow the rest of the corps down the country. This will give you a hundred and thirty sabres more. The Lahore Light Horse (Eurasians) have been ordered off also. The Guides are now on their way up to Peshawur, and must be near Umballa. I have requested the commanding officer to send on the Cavalry by forced marches. On their arrival at Peshawur I shall be able to send down two squadrons of the 2nd Punjab Cavalry, Sikhs and Pathans, many of whom are old soldiers. I hope, within a month, to have started from Lahore some thousand Sowars, so as to make up the Cavalry reinforcements to sixteen hundred sabres. Let me know if this will suffice, or whether more will be required. As each party starts, Colonel Macpherson will send you notice. They ought, however, to be in your neighbourhood about the following dates:—

|  |             |          |
|--|-------------|----------|
| 1st Sikh Cavalry . . . . .                 | 570 sabres, | Feb. 15  |
| Lahore Horse . . . . .                     | 120 "       | March 1  |
| Punjabi troop of 17th Irregulars . . . . . | 80 "        | March 15 |
| Two squadrons of 2nd P.C. . . . .          | 160 "       | April 1  |
| Pathan Horse of sorts . . . . .            | 660 "       | April 1  |

1,590

You may depend on my doing all I can to send them down as quickly as possible. You might give orders for them to make play and not

delay on the road. All will go straight to Meerut. I want to know if you will require any of the three regiments of European Infantry now bound to the Punjab *via* Kurrachi. I will gladly keep them, for we require them. Still, if necessary, we could spare one. I want also to know if you require Artillery. We can easily give you one battery or troop, and, at a pinch, two; though General Gowan is much averse to it. Still he has agreed. We expect also to be able to give you two regiments more of Punjab Infantry—one new, the other old—directly the Guides reach Peshawur—say about February 20. And when Scinde sends us a Beluch or Bombay regiment of Infantry, we will make shift to send a third regiment of Infantry down. I can raise more Cavalry, but it takes time, and they are not very good thus hastily raised.

We trust that the news of your success at Cawnpore is correct. We are all well in the Punjab. What is to be done with all the Pandies we have here? They are sadly in the way. But what can be done with them?

A letter like this must have shown Sir Colin, with his small force, on what a vast reserve of strength he had to fall back in the person of Sir John Lawrence, a reserve which was likely to prove equal to all emergencies. 'The promise of so much Cavalry,' said his Chief of the Staff, General Mansfield, in a burst of gratitude, 'is indeed a grateful one. It was among the numerous urgent wants which were most urgently pressing upon us. 'The transient successes of Infantry are, in the long run, quite unavailing, unless it is possible to follow them up with a cloud of horsemen.'

That Sir John Lawrence's performance was equal to his promise need hardly be said. He was even better than his word. By the middle of February he had sent down not merely 1,600 but more than 3,000 Cavalry drawn from all quarters, three regiments of Punjab Infantry, one of English Infantry, and twelve guns! Nor was he willing to give material aid alone at such a crisis. The Commander-in-Chief was, just then, preparing for his final advance on Lucknow, which was to be followed up by the reconquest of Oude and Rohilkund. Was the war to continue to be one of simple extermination, or was it not right—now that the balance had declared itself in our favour—to hold out the olive branch to the less guilty among the soldiers and peoples who were still in arms against us? This was the question which occupied some of John Lawrence's most anxious thoughts for months to come. He lost no oppor-

tunity of urging his views on all who had any influence in the matter ; and that he and those who agreed with him were right, will probably be the opinion of those who glance at his arguments and recollect the prolonged struggle and the loss of life, native as well as European, which was the result of the contrary policy.

Unhappily, the cry for war to the knife was still in the ascendant, and Sir John Lawrence, who could never be accused of not having the courage of his opinions, wrote to press his views in favour of an amnesty on Lord Canning :—

February 1, 1858.

My Lord,—I do not know whether you may feel disposed or not to grant anything like an amnesty in favour of the least guilty of the mutineers and insurgents in Oude and elsewhere. But I feel persuaded that such a measure would be very politic. It is much easier for people to advocate the destruction of all offenders than to show how this can be effected. Now that we have taken Delhi, beaten every large body of mutineers in the field, and are prepared to enter Oude again in force, we should simplify matters much if we issued a proclamation declaring that those mutineers who have not murdered their officers, or women or children, and who gave up their arms shall be allowed to go to their homes and live unmolested. In like manner, I would deal with the common insurgents. We could then deal more easily with the desperate characters. At present, all are held together from the very desperation of their condition. If this continue, it is difficult to foresee when the country will be pacified. When the enemy can no longer keep together behind walls in numbers, they will break up into small parties, plunder the country, and carry on a guerilla war.

At present, many Englishmen advocate a policy of extermination, never reflecting how injurious such a course of conduct must prove to ourselves. In the same way, they advocated the annexation of the Punjab in 1846, utterly forgetful, or rather in total ignorance, of the circumstance that we had not the means of carrying out such a measure. In both the Sikh wars matters were quickly adjusted and peace and security restored, because we dealt wisely with our enemies. After the first war, we treated the Sikhs as a nation with generosity. In the second war, we acted with equal consideration to them as individuals. While we put down crime with a strong hand, as regarded the past we were lenient and generous.

I fully admit that we have now to deal with a very different enemy. Still we should not also forget that, as a ruling power, we have also our shortcomings and want of foresight to answer for. We placed temptation and opportunity before the mutineers, which it was difficult to resist. Hundreds, perhaps thousands, committed themselves simply from the force of circumstances : on the one hand threatened with fire and sword if they refused ; on the other, plunder and social advantages

were pressed on them. Many hesitated long, but seeing no vitality in our power, no prospect of succour, they concluded that the game was up, and began to act for themselves. It is well known that, in former days, the Mahratta armies were recruited by the people of the very provinces which they were laying waste. Oppressed and plundered to-day, these people became robbers and plunderers in their turn. And so it may prove with our enemies. We cannot destroy them without injuring all their relations and connections. The one hundred thousand mutineers of the Bengal army and its contingents probably represent half a million of men. Will it not then be wise to reduce the number of desperadoes as far as possible? Unless matters are managed with great tact and judgment, our difficulties in Oude may only commence after the capture of Lucknow. The mutineers have their homes and families in Oude. They can fly no further. They will disperse, and may make a guerilla war of it against us.

A noble letter, remarkable alike for its statesmanship and its humanity! The views contained in it were supported, as I gather from other letters, by Sir James Outram from the beleaguered Alum Bagh, and by General Mansfield, who was the mainspring of the preparations for his liberation. But, for some reason or other, they were not acted upon by the authorities till it was too late, and with the consequences which Sir John Lawrence had predicted.

On February 28, Sir Colin Campbell set out from Cawnpore at the head of the most splendid British force which had ever been collected in India—a force consisting of some twenty thousand men and one hundred and eighty guns—to relieve Outram and reconquer Lucknow. The blindest of the mutineers could see that, henceforward, the cause of the Feringhis would not rest on moral force alone, and there was no one in the English army who did not feel convinced that the rebels, though they numbered over a hundred thousand men, would neither face us in the open field, nor offer a prolonged resistance behind their well-planned fortifications.

But would it be possible to destroy the enemy as a military force, and so, to prevent their escape in armed bodies to regions where we could hardly hope to meet them, face to face, again? That was the important question. It was one to which the heroic defender of the Alum Bagh, no less than the Commander-in-Chief, had given his most anxious thoughts. After many days of hard fighting, the city of Lucknow, which had, for nine long months, defied us,

fell into our power. But an unfortunate order—the only mistake, perhaps, made by Sir Colin Campbell in his whole plan of operations—prevented Outram, as he thought, from inflicting upon the retreating army a blow which must have turned their retreat into their rout or their annihilation; and the rebel force lived to fight us for many a weary month to come.

Had an offer of pardon been made, even now, to the less guilty of the fugitives, it is probable that it would have sown dissension in their ranks, would have cut down their numbers, have saved many who deserved to be saved, and have encouraged the population of the country to declare themselves in our favour. Unfortunately, a proclamation of a very different character appeared—a proclamation not of a discriminating amnesty, but of an almost indiscriminate confiscation. It confiscated, in fact, with some insignificant exceptions, the whole of the land in Oude. Those who have nothing to lose have little to fear; and what wonder if, finding that they had only their lives to sell, the mutineers determined to sell them as dearly as possible, in a guerilla warfare which would give us a minimum of profit and a maximum of anxiety and effort?

The circumstances and motives of this strange proclamation were partially explained by Lord Canning at a later period. But it carried dismay wherever it was known. It was condemned in India as in England. It found as little favour with Sir John Lawrence as with Sir James Outram. It was the more perplexing because it proceeded from the most humane, and courageous, and noble-minded of men, the man who had withstood the panic, and the passion, and the fierce cry for vengeance which rose from England and from Calcutta in the early days of the Mutiny.

Happily the confiscation turned out to be one chiefly in name. That it was never intended to do all that it appeared to do, is certain from the whole of Lord Canning's previous career; from the explanations which he subsequently gave; from the spirit in which he received the remonstrances of Outram and others and allowed them to add a saving clause at its close; and from the way in which, on the submission of the Talukdars, it was allowed to become almost a dead letter. But that it was a grave political

mistake Lord Canning's most strenuous admirers will allow.

But the heavy burden, military and political, which must rest on the shoulders of the Chief Commissioner of Oude, now that the rebel army had once more given us the slip, was not to fall on the man who had borne the brunt of the struggle at the Alum Bagh, and who was so much opposed to the confiscation policy which just now seemed to be in the ascendant. Outram received from the Government the highest recognition of his services which it was in its power to give, the post of Military Member of Council, and Robert Montgomery was summoned from the Punjab to take his place. What remarkable energy Montgomery had shown during the Mutiny no reader of this biography will need to be reminded. But a few lines, showing his chief's appreciation of him, written before there was any thought of separation, will be read with interest, now that the two men were about, after so life-long an intimacy, to take, for a time, different paths.

He is a fine fellow, brave as a lion, and gentle as a lamb. I don't know any man in India who has deserved better of Government than he has. When the insurrection broke out, I was at Rawul Pindi. It was mainly Robert Montgomery's moral courage and coolness and decision which kept things straight at Lahore. But for him, the Hindustani troops would not have been disarmed, in which case God only knows what would have happened.

The Punjab, as we have seen, had sent forth with eager profusion its best soldiers, Nicholson and Chamberlain, Coke, Daly, Alexander Taylor, and many others, to play their parts before Delhi. It was now to send forth its best civilians, one by one, to some of the most difficult or important provinces in India, men who would discharge their trust with the maxims and in the spirit, and with something also of the insatiable appetite for work and the simple-minded devotion to duty, which they had acquired in the Lawrence school. It was a self-emptying process, which can hardly yet be said to have spent its force. Sir Robert Montgomery in Oude was only the first of a long succession of Punjab civilians who, like Sir Donald Macleod or Sir Henry Davies, Sir George Campbell, Sir Richard Temple or Sir Charles

Aitcheson, not to speak here of Sir John Lawrence himself, have risen to some of the highest posts in the Empire, and have filled them with an almost monotonously uniform success.

Of course what India gained, the Punjab lost. Sickness or death, or the demands of the service elsewhere, had already made great gaps in the ranks of those whose names will be for ever connected with the establishment of British rule in the Punjab. Henry Lawrence was sleeping at Lucknow; John Nicholson at Delhi; Montgomery was already Chief Commissioner of Oude, and Macpherson had been called away by Sir Colin Campbell to help him in his Oude campaign; Daly had gone into Rajpootana to help George Lawrence; and Robert Napier, who had just returned from England, was finding a splendid field for his military abilities in the North-West and in Central India. But enough of the old staff still remained to keep alive the spirit and to hand on to others unbroken the best traditions of the Punjab. There still remained with their chief, Donald Macleod, who was afterwards to become Lieutenant-Governor of the province, Becher and Thornton, Edwardes and James, Temple and Barnes, Lake and Pollock, Roberts and Ricketts, Douglas Forsyth, and Reynell Taylor. And, more than this, the places of those who were gone were, in many cases, filled by men who had left the Punjab in obedience to the demands of the Mutiny, but now gravitated back towards it. Thus Richard Lawrence returned from the charge of the Jummoo Contingent and the Jhujjer district, and became Military Secretary to his brother in the room of Macpherson. Neville Chamberlain, to John Lawrence's infinite delight, threw up the Adjutant-Generalship of the Bengal army, and, having recovered from his wound, returned to the command of the Punjab Frontier Force, with which his heart had always been. Harry Lumsden, too, who had been shut up, with his brother Peter, a close prisoner in Candahar, at times in some danger of his life, and always pining for active and honourable service during the Mutiny in India, was, at length, relieved from his perilous solitary confinement, and returned to the command of the Guides, whom he had originally helped to raise.

The object of Lumsden's mission, it will be remembered, had been to see that the subsidy given by the English



Government to the Ameer was applied to its proper purpose. But they had been able to see nothing of the kind. Close prisoners in Candahar, they had seen about as much of Afghanistan as a foreigner, accused of crime, might see of England from the windows of a railway carriage, as he travelled from London to York, under a strong escort of police. They returned, therefore, profoundly impressed with the folly and the danger involved in sending an Englishman to represent his country among a people so attached to their independence, so suspicious of foreigners, so treacherous and so ferocious as the Afghans.

Their mission did good service, at the time and for twenty years to come, in helping to drive this lesson home. And it may be well, now that the fate which befell Burnes and Macnaughten in 1841, and might at any time have befallen Lumsden in 1857, has, in the recurring cycle of our folly, befallen Cavagnari in 1879, to draw attention once more to the lessons for the future which may be learned from the nearly forgotten mission of the Lumsdens.

Among the letters of congratulation which had been crowding in upon Sir John Lawrence from all parts of the Empire, since the taking of Delhi, the first in point of interest must have been one from his former chief, Lord Dalhousie. Worn down by the inroads of rapidly increasing disease, and his superlative merits as an administrator temporarily obscured by the share which his annexations were then supposed to have had in bringing on the Mutiny, Lord Dalhousie had been watching, in dignified silence, but with rapt attention and interest, the bursting of the storm around his pet province and his Chief Lieutenant. If his annexations had in any way precipitated the storm, he could, at least, feel that it was by the province which he had first annexed, and by the Lieutenant whom he had himself placed there, that it had been, in great part, laid; and little wonder if, while he still said nothing of himself, but confidently left the part he had played to the judgment of a remote posterity, he poured forth his sympathy to John Lawrence thus :—

Malta : November 28, 1857.

My dear John,—I have not troubled you with any letters during the last terrible months, because I felt assured that you would not doubt

the deep interest with which I should watch your measures and their results; in which case I thought I should do well to abstain from occupying even a few minutes of your time. But now that a little blue sky is beginning to appear through the clouds, and now that the 'Gazette' has begun to speak, I must break silence, and congratulate you on the Red Ribbon (the G.C.B.) which you have so nobly won for yourself. Never was that honour more fully earned, and never has it been conferred with more unanimous assent from the country, than when it was allotted to you.

You will easily conceive with what pride I have seen the part you have played in these great scenes, and how the Punjab has been the great bulwark of defence for the Indian Empire, in the time of its seeming extremity. Be assured that your conduct and services are fully appreciated by your countrymen, and that they are conscious of and grateful for the invaluable aid that has been rendered by you, splendidly backed by Montgomery and by Nicholson, and, so far as I am able to see, by every man under your orders.

Once more let me congratulate you heartily and affectionately on your Ribbon, and on the fame of which it is the emblem. I knew, before I left England, that the Cabinet designed more than one mark of its confidence and approbation for you, and I have rejoiced in it all. I would to God that your brother Henry had lived to enjoy the honours which would, undoubtedly, have been accorded to him, and to share with your friends the pleasure which his warm and generous heart would have especially felt in witnessing the distinction you were earning for yourself, side by side with him. But he rests in the death he would himself have wished to die, and his name will long live after him.

Pray remember me to Montgomery, and to Edwardes, and Lake, and any of the old lot whom you may see. I remember you all, on my own behalf, with constant and grateful regard.

Lady Susan will not be content without my adding her best regards and congratulations to you. We are in this island for the winter. I hope it may do me good, for I am still quite disabled. Always, my dear John,

Most sincerely yours,  
DALHOUSIE.

The enemy had, at length, been driven out of Rohilkund, but they had not been destroyed as a military force. They had given the slip twice over to Sir Colin Campbell, and had fallen back into Oude to await the opening of a new campaign—a campaign which could not begin till the cool weather came. Meanwhile, they were amusing themselves by making raids across the Rohilkund border, carrying fire and sword into the peaceable villages, and were back again before our troops could come to the rescue. In Oude itself we held 'little beyond the reach of our guns;' and, worse

still, early in June, the town of Gwalior—though happily not its famous fort—fell into the hands of the rebels, while the Maharaja had to fly for his life. Sir John Lawrence knew what this implied, and he lost no time in pressing upon Sir Colin Campbell the importance of recovering it instantly and at any cost, of calling for large reinforcements from England, and of once more begging the Government to build a golden bridge for the more innocent of our enemies.

If Sir Hugh Rose be unable to attack and expel the mutineers, we may anticipate a general insurrection in that country, which will probably extend through Central India. As Government will not hear of an amnesty for any of the mutineers, I think we should prepare for a campaign on an extensive scale in the cold weather. It is essential to us that we should either condone the offences of the least guilty of the mutineers, or destroy them. To defeat them without destroying them will not bring peace or security. They have nowhere to fly to. They must obtain terms, or fight it out with us. I have always thought that the advance on Lucknow, or, at any rate, after we had expelled them from that city, was the time to admit such as were willing, exclusive of the cold-blooded murderers, to terms. It will now be more difficult to bring them to terms, because the severity of the season prevents our exerting a sufficient pressure on them.

Still I would counsel that an amnesty be offered to all but the worst offenders. Whether it be accepted or not, it will do good; for, even if refused, it will gradually breed disunion and insecurity among the mutineers. I feel, however, persuaded that by a little management, thousands would give up their weapons, and return to their homes. At first, only a few might surrender, but as others saw that they were fairly treated, they would also come in. Whatever policy, however, is pursued, as regards the treatment of the mutineers, I think it would be well to write urgently to England, so as to get out as large a body of Cavalry as possible. I look on it that every month this war lasts, it is a serious blow to our prestige and power in India, and even in Europe. No man can foresee indeed what may happen. By the cold weather, we may have a war on this frontier. The army of the Maharaja of Kashmere is by no means in a satisfactory state, and we may have an outbreak there. He has by no means the ability and prestige of his father. A considerable number of our mutineers have taken refuge in his border villages, and he is unwilling or afraid to seize and give them up. . . . I wish indeed that I could have met you. Hitherto it would not have been politic for me to have left the Punjab, even for a few days. I have not been well lately. Plenty of work and the heat in camp have told on me. If better, I shall go down in July when the rain has fallen, and possibly might manage to meet you. But my presence in the country, just now, and indeed while the struggle lasts, is of importance.

The resignation of Lord Ellenborough, 'a new, inauspicious element,' as Prince Albert had aptly called him, in the Derby administration, after the publication of his sweeping censure of the Oude Proclamation, had saved the Cabinet of which he had been a member, and had brought into his place a man who, by sound judgment, by his 'statesmanlike insight into character and race,' and by his interest in India, stimulated, but not first aroused, by his travels there in 1852, seemed well fitted to preside over its destinies, while it was passing from the nominal sway of the Company to that of the Crown, and to make a solid contribution towards the settlement of the great questions—military, political, and religious—which had been raised by the Mutiny. We have seen, in an earlier chapter, how, by his visit to Lahore, and by his journey along the Derajat frontier, Lord Stanley had made the acquaintance and had come to appreciate the characters of both the Lawrences. And it was fortunate for England and for India that, at this critical juncture, the abounding knowledge of India possessed by Sir John Lawrence was placed at the disposal of Lord Stanley, and welcomed by him, as such knowledge will always be welcomed by a true statesman.

Murri: June 16, 1858.

My dear Lord Stanley,—I do not think that I have ever written you a line since I had the pleasure of making your acquaintance at Lahore. Our paths have lain in such different directions, and we have both been so fully employed, that little time or occasion for communication has existed. We are now, however, passing through a great crisis in India, and on its proper management will, in a great measure, depend not only the future destinies of this great appanage of England, but the very security of her sons and daughters in India. We are by no means progressing out here in the satisfactory manner people seem to think in England.

Up to the fall of Delhi, it was a struggle for existence. After that event matters greatly improved. It gave indeed a deadly blow to the Mutiny. It was also followed up with some vigour. A Division followed up the enemy, and gave them little rest. Brigades scoured the country, and, in many places, reduced the people to obedience. The large reinforcements which landed from England proved to the mutineers and insurgents that English soldiers were forthcoming. The delay, however, in attacking Lucknow; the escape of the great body of the mutineers from that city; and their, I may say, general escape on every occasion, when we might have cut up large bodies of them, and the policy which has been laid down, have operated for much mischief. We are now, I believe, in a worse condition than we have yet been since

the fall of Delhi. The mutineers have now learnt how to fight us to advantage. They spread themselves over the country, and coerce and overawe the people. They plunder and murder our friends, and collect the revenue. As we advance in one direction, they make for another. In the meantime the climate is more deadly than the enemy. It kills our European soldiers by hundreds and thousands. By the time the cold weather arrives, the season for active military operations, we shall have no sufficient body of soldiers to take the field. We have Oude to reconquer. In that province we hold nothing beyond the range of our guns at Lucknow. Gwalior has fallen into the hands of the mutineers with, I fear, a couple of million of treasure. Unless we can retake it, which is at least problematical, a general insurrection, throughout the Mahratta States, may be anticipated. Central India is a strong country, difficult for military operations; and, with plenty of money, soldiers can be procured in any numbers. We have re-occupied Rohilkund, but that province, the Gangetic Doab, Benares and Behar, are overrun by large bands of guerillas. The people are rapidly becoming accustomed to war and rapine; in fact, falling back into the old state in which they were plunged before we became the supreme power in India. In England, 80,000 or 100,000 of our troops appear a prodigious force, but when quotas are told off for all parts of India, such a body of soldiers is, really, very small. Out of these, moreover, large deductions for casualties must be made. Before, perhaps, a single regiment landed from England in 1857, we must have been from 8,000 to 10,000 men below our complement. Since then, several thousands have died, and still more have been disabled. I should doubt much if 50,000 English troops are, at this moment, available.

We are all quiet in the Punjab, and even down to the banks of the Jumna. But, day by day, the scenes in Hindustan must be producing their effects. Contrary to sound policy, but driven by the sheer necessity of our position, I have raised large bodies of Punjabi soldiers, and have still to raise more. I have 57,000 of these troops on my rolls. We have only Punjabi troops with which to hold the country and aid in reconquering Hindustan. These troops have behaved admirably hitherto. But it is not in human nature that they should not see of how much importance they are to us, how much the success of the present struggle depends on them. It is not wise, it is not politic that this should go on.

I would also say a few words on the policy which has hitherto prevailed. It has all along appeared to me that the press, the European society, and the Government have taken too high a line. With the majority of Englishmen the cry has been 'War to the knife!' totally forgetting that such a policy requires proportionate power. Now it seems to me that, setting aside all considerations of mercy and humanity, we have not the means of enforcing such a policy. If every insurgent, or even every mutineer, is to be put to death, or transported beyond the seas, we shall require 200,000 European soldiers, and, even then, we shall not put down all opposition in half a dozen years. Is England prepared to send out these troops? Is England prepared to send out from twenty to thirty thousand troops annually to supply casualties?

If she is not, it behoves you all to meet the difficulty fairly, and to decide what ought to be done. Our prestige is gone! our power literally slipping away. In attempting to compass an impracticable policy we are endangering our very Empire in the East. I am no advocate for forgiving the murderers of our women and children. I would hunt all such wretches down. But, to do this effectually, we must discriminate between the mutineers. At present, every man who is caught is hanged or shot. Who will surrender under such circumstances? Thus all classes of mutineers or insurgents are bound together by the very desperation of their position. When we advanced on Lucknow with our large and efficient force, and with our tremendous Artillery, we should have offered terms to all but the cold-blooded murderers. Entrenched behind their fortifications, few would have then surrendered. But our offers would have become well known, and would have led to discussion and dissension and insecurity. When the insurgents had once been driven out of Lucknow, our proclamations would have begun to bear fruit, and, provided only that those who came in first were treated leniently, more would have followed. By this time, thousands of men now in arms would probably be sitting down quietly in their villages. We have missed a good opportunity, and have thereby aggravated our difficulties.

But, even now, it is not too late. While doing all we can to separate the less guilty from the desperadoes, we must also be in a position to deal heavy and rapid blows on all those who continue in arms. Our offers of life and personal security will bear fruit most abundantly when backed by real power. In the one hand we should hold out the olive branch, and with the other deal destruction. To enable us to do this, England should send out every man that can be spared. All should be out here early in October. We are in great want of good Light Cavalry. Two or three thousand Yeomanry selected for the especial work, and coming out here for two or three years' service, would prove invaluable. Our Heavy English Cavalry, except in a stand-up fight, are nearly useless. With a large and efficient European force, we can then raise any number of native troops. Without a considerable body of such auxiliaries, we can indeed neither reconquer the country nor hold it, if reconquered. With a sufficient European army, such troops, properly disciplined and commanded, would prove perfectly innocuous. Above all, we require for this purpose the best man whom England can provide, and this man should be invested with unlimited power. Ability, force of character, knowledge, are all essential to bring matters to a successful issue.

Pray do not suppose that there is any personal motive in what I have said. I have been, hitherto, contented to hold my own post, and do my duty to the best of my ability. I neither look for, nor desire, nor expect anything for myself. I have served now twenty-nine years in India. I have had my share of work. My health is much shaken, and my sole desire is to return home and settle down among my children. I have no aspirations for employment in India, but when I retire I should like to do so with honour. I should like to do it when I saw that real danger was over. I had made up my mind to go home last

February. But this was impossible. My present wish is to get off next February.

I make no apologies for this long letter. One in your position can do much. I can do little but give you a true account of affairs. I do not ask you to take for granted all I say. Test it by your own sources of information. Compare what I say with what others say, with what you can glean from the public prints. Even supposing that I have over-estimated difficulties, no reasonable man, who is behind the scenes, can deny that our position is, in a high degree, precarious and dangerous. Even as a matter of economy, it is better to make a great effort now to trample down rebellion than to allow it to continue for years. Every day the war lasts is fraught with dangers, many of which it is difficult even to foresee. We may have a war in Europe. We may have a commotion in Central Asia. The changes which the death of Ameer Dost Mohammed Khan would cause at Cabul and Khorassan must be great. They may lead to an embroglio along our western border. The continuous struggle in which we are engaged may lead to combinations among the different powerful chiefs in the country. They have seen the Maharaja of Gwalior driven in disgrace from his own kingdom. They have no security that the demoralisation will not extend to their own troops. They may consider that it is easier to swim with the stream than to struggle against the torrent. I perceive the new Maharaja of Kashmere is by no means at ease, and that his troops are somewhat excited. Every Poorbea soldier who finds an asylum in the Jummoo border propagates lies against us. We have twelve thousand of these soldiers unarmed, many of them encamped under range of our guns. The terrors of transportation, the uncertainty of their ultimate fate, the feeling of their evil intentions, all render them right desperate. They cannot but believe that we shall ultimately destroy them. Hence they leave no stone unturned to do us all the harm they can. I ask you to reflect how greatly embarrassed we must be, with such men on our hands; how desperately shackled we must be in the event of insurrection or invasion.

I will say no more. I appeal to your feelings as an Englishman and a patriot to come forward and aid us in our difficulties. England may not otherwise awake before it is too late.

It is not difficult to imagine the influence which such a letter would have upon a statesman like Lord Stanley. It described the situation exactly as it was, not as it ought to be, or as Government might well wish that it might be. The picture was worked in in gloomy colours; but only with the hope that when they had produced the effect intended, and aroused all concerned to a united effort, they might be painted out by other and brighter tints.

Happily, when things were at their worst they began to mend. Gwalior, which had been lost to us by a bold

stroke on the part of the mutineers, was recovered, before the end of the month, by a still bolder on the part of Sir Hugh Rose ; and with its recovery and the brilliant pursuit of the mutineers by Robert Napier, passed away the immediate danger of a rising among the Mahratta States. Better still, Government at length did give some signs of ' dealing largely with the Sepoy question,' and in the direction so long advocated by Sir John Lawrence.

There were in the Punjab some 15,000 disarmed Sepoys, men equally suspecting and suspected, a source of danger to every Station in which they were to be found, and altogether forming a grave addition to the anxieties of men who were already overburdened. There were some who recommended that when the Mutiny was over, the Sepoys should be restored, with few exceptions, to their former position ; a step dangerous enough whenever and however it should be carried out, and, meanwhile, involving an indefinite prolongation of anxiety and misgiving. Others were for indiscriminate banishment. But the just and merciful, and, at the same time, prudent course advocated by Sir John Lawrence won the day. Convinced that many of the Sepoys were innocent or had been hurried away by the ' madness of the moment,' he had done what he could to make their position since disarmament less intolerable. In particular, knowing the resistance and therefore the bloodshed which it would occasion, he had opposed the proposition of Cotton to employ the Sepoys at Peshawur in forced labour on the public roads, and he opposed, still more strenuously, the proposition of the Lahore authorities to confine the Sepoys of the Mean Meer cantonment, as though they were all convicted criminals, in the central jail. Whatever their intentions towards us, each disarmed Sepoy must have died a hundred deaths in imagination during the long months which had passed since disarmament. We have seen how, at a very early period of the Mutiny, Sir John Lawrence had begged Lord Canning to allow the better disposed among the Sepoys to be sent to their homes, and leave was now at last given him to do as he desired. All details were left to him, and his plan was as simple as it was safe. Three parties of twenty disarmed men set out each day from each of three stations, and having been conducted



by an armed escort at the rate of ten miles a day, and by three different routes, towards the frontier nearest to their respective provinces, were allowed to make their way thence, by themselves, to their homes.\* All combination was thus rendered impossible. A slight outbreak of the hitherto faithful 10th Infantry at Dera Ghazi Khan, and a more serious one of the 67th and 69th at Mooltan—both of them suppressed without difficulty—convinced Sir John Lawrence that the homeward movement was not less but more desirable than it had seemed before. And thus, within a few weeks, the Punjab was cleared, without mishap, of 15,000 men, each one of whom might have proved, in combination with others, a still formidable foe, but was now to become, with very few exceptions, a peaceful cultivator of the ground, or to rejoin our service in the guise of a policeman.

Some few regiments, which had given no cause of complaint, and had been disarmed simply as a matter of precaution, were exempted from the general sentence, and received back their arms with honour. Such were the 59th Native Infantry, whom Nicholson, when he disarmed them at Umritsur, had himself begged his chief to treat with consideration as soon as the Mutiny should be over. Such, too, was the 58th, at Rawul Pindi, whom Sir John Lawrence had himself induced, in spite of their temporary panic, to lay down their arms, and in whom therefore he felt something of the personal interest of a preserver. And such, once more, were the detachments of various mutinous regiments, men who had stood firm when their comrades had risen against us, had saved the treasure committed to them, and protected the lives of their officers or their officers' wives and children at the risk of their own. These detachments were, on Sir John Lawrence's recommendation, formed into a regiment of Irregulars, which was to be called by the proud name of the *Wafaiyar Pultan*, or 'Faithful Regiment.'

Other rewards were given, and that with no niggard hand, to the great chieftains of Puttiala and Jheend, of Nabha and Kuppurthalla, who had been 'faithful among the faithless,' and had come forward to our support when our prospects were at their darkest. Here, too,\* Sir John

\* Cave Brown's *Punjab and Delhi*, vol. ii. p. 255.

Lawrence might justly feel that it was his policy which had enabled them to rally to our side. For it was he who had urged upon General Anson an immediate advance upon Delhi at a time when every leading officer at Head-quarters was for delay or circumspection; and, had his representations not been successful, the whole country between the Jumna and the Sutlej would have risen and have carried the chiefs, who had now so loyally served us, to the other side. From the moment that Delhi fell he had not ceased to urge upon the Supreme Government the importance of rewarding these chiefs at once, and in that shape which goes nearest to the hearts of all Indian potentates, by grants of land. His recommendations were now, at length, carried out, and the loyal princes received their reward under conditions which bound them to us by closer ties, and helped to paralyse the adjoining robber tribes.

The forced loan, at the rate of 6 per cent. interest, which, early in the Mutiny, had been levied by order of Sir John Lawrence on different districts of the Punjab, had been raised with some difficulty—for the visits of the tax-gatherer are never pleasant, and the money-loving Sikh was not likely to give his money readily in support of a doubtful cause—but raised it had been. And it proved a master-stroke of policy. For it supplied us with funds when we needed them most sorely, and bound the land-owners and merchants to the cause of our Government by ties the force of which they could not fail to recognise. And now, within a year, it was religiously repaid, interest and all, to our anxious creditors!

On another principle equally well understood in the East, that a community is responsible for the acts of the individuals of which it is composed, Sir John Lawrence issued an order that all damage done to individuals in a given district should be made good by fines levied on it. And thus again, within little more than a year, every loyal citizen in the Punjab received full compensation for any loss that he had suffered.

How Sir John Lawrence dealt with the cry for blood which had been raised after the fall of Delhi, and which was still to be heard in the districts that were falling again under our rule in India, I have already shown.

But there was another cry which was beginning to make itself heard both in England and in India, and which called not less loudly for the insight, the grasp, the calmness, the toleration of a Christian statesman. The cry now raised was for 'the elimination of all unchristian principles from the government of India.' How this came about requires explanation. The English Government had always, hitherto, professed to observe a strict neutrality between the rival creeds of its subject races. In early times, indeed, it had gone beyond this. For while, partly from prudential considerations, and partly from religious indifference, it had tolerated and authorised, or even encouraged, some of the most debasing customs or cruel and immoral religious rites of its subjects, it had systematically discouraged all attempts to introduce Christianity into India.

That day had long since gone by. Christian missionaries were no longer in danger of being browbeaten by the authorities. But the Bible was still a forbidden book in all Government schools, even for those who wished to read it; and converts to Christianity who, by the mere fact of their conversion, had cut themselves off from all employment by their fellow-countrymen, found themselves also practically debarred from employment by their conquerors.

But now the Mutiny had come. It had caused 'men to think as well as to act, and many maxims of government and conduct which had, hitherto, been accepted axioms were brought into question, and judged in the new and lurid, and possibly, misleading light thrown on them by that great upheaval. There had always been among the servants of the East India Company a leaven of men who had strong religious convictions, men who were not wholly content to hide their light under a bushel, and had, in uneasy moments, asked themselves after the manner of the early half-converts to Christianity, whether it was possible to serve both the Company and Christ, or whether they must needs make a choice between the one and the other. These men belonged chiefly to what is called the Evangelical School. It is a type of religion, which, like the Puritanism of which it is the child, has sometimes tended to become narrow, hard, and uncharitable. But, upon the other hand, it is to the zeal and the devotion, the burning love to God and man

which have characterised its chief apostles, that we owe it that any form of religion was kept alive in England in the most flippant and heartless of epochs. And it is to them, too, that some of the most salutary social reforms, the most flourishing religious societies, and the most far-reaching and comprehensive charitable institutions of which England has to boast, owe their origin and progress.

Now it was observed by religious men in India, that had the Sepoys possessed any real knowledge of Christianity; had not, in fact, pains been taken to keep that knowledge from them, they could never have supposed that the English Government intended to make Christians of them against their will by a series of external acts. There was much truth in this, and had the times been altogether quiet times there would have been little to say on the other side. But the times were not quiet times, and in moments of panic, above all of religious panic, the more incredible, the more preposterous, the more impossible a thing is, the more readily does it propagate itself and spread like wildfire among the multitude. In any case, as the Mutiny gradually subsided, a cry for an entire change of religious policy was raised in India. It was re-echoed, with exaggerations, on religious platforms in England, and it, finally, found a mouthpiece in India in the person of Herbert Edwardes, one of Sir John Lawrence's most distinguished lieutenants, a man of much rhetorical power, and, as this biography has shown throughout, of very great force of character.

After consultation with friends who were of a like mind at Peshawur, Edwardes issued his famous Memorandum on 'the elimination of all unchristian principles from the government of India.' Among what he called the 'unchristian elements' in our policy, against which his attack was directed, were the exclusion of the Bible and of Christian teaching from Government schools, the endowment of native religions by the public revenue, the recognition of caste, the observance of native holydays in the public offices, the administration by the English of Hindu and Mohammedan law, the publicity of Hindu and Mohammedan processions, the restrictions on the marriage of European soldiers in India, and the connection of Government with the opium trade.

Here was a comprehensive programme, and how did

Sir John Lawrence deal with it? It is obvious from what I have said already that there was something in it with which he would heartily agree. But there was much also to which he would offer, to which any true statesman would offer, and, not least, the more calmly-judging even of Edwardes' own school, an uncompromising opposition. The answer he gave is one of the most comprehensive and sagacious which ever came from his pen, and I give the more important paragraphs.

The above heads (the ten unchristian elements enumerated by Edwardes in his Memorandum on the government of India) are certainly comprehensive, and embrace almost every point on which the conduct of the British Government, in reference to Christianity, could be open to doubt or question. How far they actually exist or how far some of them are really unchristian, may be matter for further consideration. But on this the Chief Commissioner's opinion will be apparent from the remarks which I am now to offer on each head separately.

3. Firstly, then, in respect to the teaching of the Bible in Government schools and colleges, I am to state that in the Chief Commissioner's judgment such teaching ought to be offered to all those who may be willing to receive it. The Bible ought not only to be placed among the college libraries and the school books for the perusal of those who might choose to consult it; but, also, it should be taught in class wherever we have teachers fit to teach it and pupils willing to hear it. Such, broadly stated, is the principle. That the time when it can be carried out in every school of every village and town throughout the length and breadth of the land may be hastened, is the aspiration of every Christian officer. But where are the means for doing this in the many thousands of schools in the interior of the country? Supposing that pupils are forthcoming to hear, who is to read and expound to them the Bible? Is such a task to be intrusted to heathen schoolmasters, who might be, and but too often would be, enemies to Christianity, and who would be removed, not only from control, but even from the chance of correction? It may be said, indeed, that the Scriptures do not need interpreters, and may be read by anyone; but still it might be possible for a village schoolmaster averse to Christianity to read and explain the Scriptures in an irreverent and improper manner. And, then, the strongest advocates of religious teaching would admit that the Bible had better not be read and explained in a perverse, captious, and sneering manner. If, then, the Bible is to be taught only by fitting persons, it will be admitted that our means are, unhappily, but very limited. This difficulty does not seem to have fully struck Colonel Edwardes; but it has been noted by Mr. Macleod, who suggests that Bible classes should be formed only in those Government schools where a chaplain or some other Christian and devout person, European or native, might be found to undertake the teaching. That some such rule must in practice be observed seems certain. But then it will be

obvious at a glance that such teachers must be extremely few. That the number will increase may, indeed, be hoped, and very possibly native teachers will be found of good characters and thoughtful minds, who, though not actually baptized Christians, are yet well disposed, and might be intrusted with the reading of the Bible to classes. But, at the best, the reading of the Bible in class must practically be restricted to but a small proportion of the Government schools. In these latter there ought to be, the Chief Commissioner considers, regular Bible classes held by a qualified person as above described, for all those who might be willing to attend. There is a good hope that such attendance would not be small; but, however small it might be, the class ought to be held, in order that our views of Christian duty might be patent to the native public, and in the trust that the example might not be without effect. The formation of Bible classes of an approved character in as many schools as possible should be a recognised branch of the educational department. Inspectors should endeavour to establish them in the same way as they originate improvements of other kinds, and the subject should be properly mentioned in all periodical reports. But, on the other hand, the Chief Commissioner would never admit that the unavoidable absence of Bible classes should be used as an argument against the establishment of schools unaccompanied by Christian teaching. If Government is not to establish a school in a village unless it can find a man fit to read the Bible, and boys willing to hear it, then there is no doubt that at first such a condition could not be fulfilled in the vast majority of cases; and the result would be that light and knowledge would be shut out from the mass of the population. A purely secular system is not, the Chief Commissioner believes, in India at least, adverse to religious influences, nor worthless without simultaneous religious instruction. On the contrary, the spread of European knowledge among the natives is, as it were, a pioneer to the progress of Christianity. The opinion of missionaries, in Upper India at least, may be confidently appealed to on this point. If this be the case, then, having established all the Bible classes we could, having done our best to augment their number, having practically shown to the world by our educational rules that we do desire that the Bible should be read and taught, we may, as Mr. Macleod has appropriately expressed it, hope that 'a blessing would not be denied to our system' of secular education. But, so far as the native religions are concerned, the Chief Commissioner considers that the education should be purely and entirely secular. These religions ought not to be taught in the Government schools. Such teaching would indeed be superfluous. The natives have ample means of their own for this purpose, and need no aid. But, if they did need aid, it is not our business to afford such. The case is of course utterly different as regards Christianity. Of that religion the native can have no knowledge except through our instrumentality. And this religion we should teach exclusively, so far as we can, from the preference which it is our right and our duty to give to what we believe to be truth. But while we say that Christianity shall be the only religion taught in our schools, we ought not, the Chief Commissioner considers, to render attendance on Bible classes

compulsory or obligatory. If Colonel Edwardes would render it thus obligatory—if he means that every pupil, if he attend school at all, must attend the Bible class, should there be one—then the Chief Commissioner entirely dissents from this view. So long as the attendance is voluntary there will be boys to attend; but, if it be obligatory, then suspicion is aroused, and there is some chance of empty benches. Moreover, as a matter of principle the Chief Commissioner believes that, if anything like compulsion enters into our system of diffusing Christianity, the rules of that religion itself are disobeyed and that we shall never be permitted to profit by our disobedience. The wrong means for a right end will recoil upon ourselves, and we shall only steel people to resistance where we might have persuaded them.

4. Secondly, Colonel Edwardes recommends that all grants or alienations from the public revenue for native religions be now resumed *in toto*. In the Chief Commissioner's opinion, it would be difficult to imagine a more impracticable measure. These grants are all old, and many of them ancient. Our predecessors granted them; succeeding Governments of different faiths respected them; they, in time, became a species of property; they acquired a kind of State guarantee, to the effect that the alienation of revenue should not be disturbed during good behaviour. On our accession, we regarded them as the property of certain religious institutions, just as conventual lands in Roman Catholic countries are ecclesiastical property. As property (held on certain conditions) we maintained them, and as nothing else. They were never considered as religious offerings on our part, either by ourselves, or by the grantees, or by the people. Of course we have made no new grants of this kind, and those previously existing we have endeavoured to curtail wherever there might be reason. In the Punjab many overgrown grants have been reduced, though care has been taken that the reduction should not be such as to press unfairly. In some cases the endowment is reduced on the death of each successive head of the institution, until a minimum is reached sufficient, with economy, to cover the expenses. We have diminished their political honour and prestige by attaching to them conditions of loyalty and good behaviour. In short, we have in no wise encouraged them. But, now, to resume them altogether would be a breach of faith (inasmuch as they have been guaranteed, with more or less of legal sanction, by ourselves), and would resemble the confiscation of property. And to do so on the ground that the institutions are heathen would be nothing short of persecution of heathenism. That anything approaching to such persecution is enjoined or sanctioned by Christianity is not to be supposed. Indeed, it might be feared that any such attempt on our part would frustrate its own object. The judgments of Providence would become manifest in the political disaffection which might ensue, and in the hatred with which our rule would be regarded by an influential priestly class suddenly thrown into distress. Such a step would be far more likely to retard than to promote the progress of Christianity, and we should never cease to be regarded by the people as the authors of an unjustifiable spoliation. Our equal and impartial forbearance towards all creeds differing from our own has always constituted one of our

first claims to the confidence of the people. It has been one of the pillars of our strength, and it has been one of the means by which we have held subject millions in control. This forbearance and just impartiality is perfectly consistent with the due profession of our own faith; and the Chief Commissioner believes that this line of conduct is practically inculcated by the whole tenour of Christianity. Whether, while thus acting, we have been sufficiently open and zealous in our own professions, may be matter for consideration. The Chief Commissioner doubts whether we have been really so remiss in this respect as Colonel Edwardes and many others believe. But he admits that in future we are called upon by the lesson of recent events to examine our ways and to strive for improvement. I am to add on this topic that, since the Punjab came into our possession, our officers have never been concerned in the administration of, or otherwise connected with, heathen shrines or institutions. If any such case had ever come to the Chief Commissioner's knowledge, he would immediately have put an end to it. . . .

6. Fourthly, Colonel Edwardes proposes that all native holydays should be disallowed in our public offices. The Chief Commissioner cannot consider this to be a reasonable proposal, and Mr. Macleod also is opposed to it. The number of these holydays should be restricted to those days on which either Hindus or Mohammedans are bound to attend the ordinances of their respective religions. But we surely cannot refuse our native *employés* permission to attend on such occasions. To refuse this would be in effect to say that a native shall not remain in our service unless he consent to abandon his religion. By all the principles of Christianity this is not the manner in which we ought to contend with heathenism. Christians are not unfrequently employed under Mohammedan Governments in various parts of the world. What would they say if their tenure of office was made conditional upon their working on Christmas-day and Good Friday? In this matter, we must not forget the maxim of doing to our native *employés* as we should wish others to do to us. Under this heading, it may not be amiss to add that the closing of all public offices and the suspension of all public works on the Sabbath, in obedience to the standing order of the Supreme Government, are duly enforced within these territories.

7. Fifthly, Colonel Edwardes thinks that in our criminal and civil administration we still adhere too strictly to the Hindu and Mohammedan laws. To this opinion, however, the Chief Commissioner cannot assent. He concurs very much in the views expressed *per contra* by Mr. Macleod. As to the criminal law, Colonel Edwardes himself has, with research and ability, shown how persistently and consistently our legislators have, in the course of half a century, eliminated every objectionable element of Mohammedan jurisprudence. Our Indian criminal law may have many defects, and may most properly be replaced by the new penal code. But still its principles, as actually administered at the present day, are consistent with morality and civilisation. As regards the civil law, Lieutenant-Colonel Edwardes remarks that any conquerors but ourselves would, long ere this, have introduced their own



code. Now the Chief Commissioner, so far as he understands the history and policy of conquering nations, believes the above opinion to be erroneous. No doubt, conquerors have always, in what they deemed important matters, enforced their own rules. But in purely civil affairs, not affecting imperial policy, and operative only as between man and man, conquerors have, as the Chief Commissioner apprehends, in all ages and countries permitted to the conquered the use of their local laws. We have done the same in India (as well as in our other dependencies and colonies), and must continue to do so. In many important respects, such as inheritance and the like, the native laws are as good as the codes of other nations. To abrogate them and to substitute a different code of our own would be impracticable, and, if by any means it were practicable, a grievous oppression would be inflicted, utterly alien to the spirit of Christianity. The Chief Commissioner cannot believe that even Colonel Edwardes would push a theory to such extreme consequences. There are, indeed, some branches of law regarding which the native codes are incomplete, and in these departments it is very properly proposed to introduce the English law. In the native codes, however, there are two points in which reform should be introduced whenever it shall be found practicable—namely, polygamy, and contracts of betrothal by parents on behalf of infant children. It cannot be said that these practices are immoral in the abstract, as they were more or less followed by the Jews and the Patriarchs; and the fact that they are not sanctioned under the Christian dispensation would not, *per se*, justify us in prohibiting their adoption by our heathen subjects. If we, by legal force, interdict things on the ground that they are not Christian, we come to enforcing Christianity by secular means. But still polygamy and early betrothals are socially very objectionable, and in reality much affect the welfare of the people. The Chief Commissioner would, therefore, earnestly desire to see the law in these respects altered, if it could be. But it cannot at present, for the people cling to it, and, in some places, would shed blood for its sake. But if ever the temper of the public mind shall change, or if we should succeed in raising up a strong party among the natives in opposition to these laws, then the time for legislation will have arrived. Further, under this head it is to be remembered that Indian legislation has made two important steps in advance by legalising the remarriage of Hindu widows, and by removing all possible civil disabilities or legal disadvantages from Christian converts. . . .

13. The various points named for discussion have now been reviewed. Before concluding this letter I am to state that Sir J. Lawrence has been led, in common with others since the occurrence of the awful events of 1857, to ponder deeply on what may be the faults and shortcomings of the British as a Christian nation in India. In considering the topics such as those treated of in this despatch he would solely endeavour to ascertain what is our Christian duty. Having ascertained that according to our erring lights and conscience, he would follow it out to the uttermost, undeterred by any consideration. If we address ourselves to this task, it may, with the blessing of Providence, not prove too difficult for us. *Measures have, indeed, been proposed as essential to*

*be adopted by a Christian Government which would be truly difficult or impossible of execution. But on closer consideration it will be found that such measures are not enjoined by Christianity, but are contrary to its spirit.* Sir John Lawrence does, I am to state, entertain the earnest belief that all those measures which are really and truly Christian can be carried out in India, not only without danger to British rule, but, on the contrary, with every advantage to its stability. *Christian things done in a Christian way will never, the Chief Commissioner is convinced, alienate the heathen. About such things there are qualities which do not provoke nor excite distrust, nor harden to resistance. It is when unchristian things are done in the name of Christianity, or when Christian things are done in an unchristian way, that mischief and danger are occasioned.* The difficulty is, amid the political complications, the conflicting social considerations, the fears and hopes of self-interest, which are so apt to mislead human judgment, to discern clearly what is imposed upon us by Christian duty and what is not. Having discerned this, we have but to put it into practice. Sir John Lawrence is satisfied that within the territories committed to his charge he can carry out all those measures which are really matters of Christian duty on the part of the Government. And, further, he believes that such measures will arouse no danger; will conciliate instead of provoking; and will subserve the ultimate diffusion of the truth among the people.

14. Finally, the Chief Commissioner would recommend that such measures and policy, having been deliberately determined on by the Supreme Government, be openly avowed and universally acted upon throughout the empire; so that there may be no diversities of practice, no isolated, tentative, or conflicting efforts, which are, indeed, the surest means of exciting distrust; so that the people may see that we have no sudden or sinister designs; and so that we may exhibit that harmony and uniformity of conduct which befits a Christian nation striving to do its duty.

There are a few passages in this noble document which are not perhaps quite consistent with the spirit of toleration as it has now come to be understood. It would be strange if it were not so, for the spirit of toleration is essentially progressive, and it has made immense strides since Sir John Lawrence's words were written. But its essentials are all there, and Sir John Lawrence's calm statesmanship, and simpler and truer views of Christianity, as is evidenced more particularly in the memorable sentences which I have ventured to print in italics, saved him from the mistakes and dangers into which the more fervid temperament of Edwardes and some of his friends would infallibly have plunged us. Edwardes' programme would, as John Lawrence was fond of expressing it, have 'upset the coach.' It would have been essentially

unjust, and, as such, it must infallibly have retarded the spread of true Christianity. And it was this conviction which led him, some years afterwards, when it was his business, as Governor-General, to select a candidate for the Lieutenant-Governorship of the Punjab, to postpone the otherwise paramount claims of Edwardes to those of the more cool-headed Donald Macleod.

The date of the above document was April 21, 1858, and it may be remarked here that it was at about the same time that the sound sense and right feeling of the Queen led her, in the same spirit, to protest against some expressions which it was proposed that she should use in assuming the direct Government of India. Lord Malmesbury, in the draft of the Proclamation which he presented to her, had spoken of her power of *undermining* the Indian religions. To this expression she at once, and strongly, objected, and proposed instead an admirable sentence to the effect that her attachment to her own religion would preclude her from any attempt to interfere with the religions and customs of the natives, which were equally dear to them ; and this sentence received a marked and happy prominence in the Proclamation, as it was ultimately sanctioned and published in India, on October 17, 1858.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

### RECOGNITION OF SERVICES.

JANUARY 1858—FEBRUARY 1859.

SIR JOHN LAWRENCE'S work in India was now drawing to its close. Peace reigned throughout the Punjab, and was slowly but surely being established throughout the rest of the peninsula. The chief difficulties in the Punjab had been settled or were in the way of settlement. The government of India had already passed from the Company, which had so long and, in later days at all events, so well administered it, to the Crown, with whom the real responsibility and power lay; and Sir John Lawrence was, at length, able to look forward, in the distance, to the rest which he had so long needed and had so long postponed.

With congratulations had come honours, though not so fast and thick as those who knew best what Sir John Lawrence had done felt that he deserved. In December 1857, he heard from Lord Panmure that he was to be made a Knight Grand Cross of the Bath, 'a communication,' said Lord Panmure, 'which it is as satisfactory to Her Majesty's Government to make, as it will be to the public in general when it becomes known;' while Lord Canning, in making the official announcement to him, wrote as follows:—

I have a better right on this occasion to be the channel through which honours from the Queen shall pass to you, than I had two years ago, when I conveyed to you your earlier dignity in the Order of the Bath—for, assuredly, nobody knows better than I do how richly this increase of distinction is deserved, and nobody has better reason to be thankful to you for the service which has won it, or is more glad to see that service acknowledged in the highest quarter.

In March 1858, Sir John Lawrence was informed that the Freedom of the City of London had been conferred upon him, and in acknowledging the communication he used these words :—

I trust that it may, one day, be my good fortune to stand in the Guildhall, and thank you all for this great mark of your consideration. Next to the feeling that I have endeavoured, under most difficult circumstances, to do my duty and maintain the honour and interests of my country, the greatest reward that I could desire is to know that my fellow-countrymen sympathise with and acknowledge my labours.

In the following autumn, he was made a Baronet, and shortly afterwards a Privy Councillor. Lord Stanley said, with reference to this acknowledgment of his services :—

I have only leisure, by this mail, to thank you for your letter, and to express the pleasure it gives me to find myself in official relations with you. You will see that Government has in some, though, I am aware, in but an inadequate measure, endeavoured to express its sense of the value of your services to India and the Empire. I trust those services are not ended, and that what is now offered may be regarded as but an instalment of what is your due.

Finding from the tone of Sir John Lawrence's letters that he was bent on returning to England as soon as he could do so with honour, Lord Stanley wrote, by the next mail, to offer him a seat in the newly formed Indian Council.

The offer thus made was accepted by Sir John Lawrence for the ensuing spring, or for such time as he might be able to leave India. But, meanwhile, the higher honour of the Peerage, at which Lord Stanley had, to all appearance, hinted, did not come. Sir Frederick Currie, the Chairman of the Court of Directors, had not ceased, alike in his official and private capacity, to urge upon the Government that a Peerage was the only fitting recognition of such services as John Lawrence had rendered. But finding that Ministers did not, at present, seem disposed to do their part, he resolved that, at all events, the Court of Directors should do theirs ; and, by almost their expiring act, they passed unanimously a resolution which, on August 25, 1858, was as unanimously confirmed by the Court of Proprietors, in

behalf of one of the last and most distinguished of their servants.

The resolution ran as follows :—

That, in recognition of the eminent merits of Sir John Laird Mair Lawrence, G.C.B., whose prompt, vigorous, and judicious measures crushed an incipient mutiny in the Punjab, and maintained the province in tranquillity during a year of almost universal convulsion; and who, by his extraordinary exertions, was enabled to equip troops and to prepare munitions of war for distant operations, thus mainly contributing to the recapture of Delhi, and to the subsequent successes which attended our arms; and in testimony of the high sense entertained by the East India Company of his public character and conduct throughout a long and distinguished career, an annuity of 2,000*l.* be granted to him, the same to commence from the date when he may retire from the service.

The honour which so many people thought was due to Sir John Lawrence had, in May 1858, been conferred on the fine old Commander-in-Chief who had recently crowned his long and distinguished career by the recapture of Lucknow. It was a distinction which was thoroughly deserved; but, a year or two afterwards, Lord Clyde, who had hoped to be able to accompany his friend to England, meeting him in London at the door of the Athenæum, said to him, 'By the way, John, did they ever offer you a peerage? They ought to have made you a peer long before they made me.' The same modesty and simplicity of character comes out so well in a letter written by Lord Clyde when he first heard of the honour which was in store for him, that I quote an extract from it :—

July 12, 1858.

My dear Lawrence,—I hope you continue well and that you have good news from Lady Lawrence. When may we look for such a state of affairs as will admit of our return home? I have been informed of Her Majesty's gracious intention to raise me to the peerage. This is a very great honour; far too great a one for a poor soldier of fortune like myself. I am approaching fast the age assigned to the life of man by the Psalmist. I have neither wife nor child. I have plenty of money; and, for an old man, I have no wants. I have had but one hope and one ambition from the termination of the Crimean service—to have a little time to myself between the camp and the grave, and to pass that little time near to some old friends, quiet and good people, who live in great retirement away from towns and the bustle of life. I should have been very grateful to have been left with my military

rank and without any other. With you, my dear friend, it is very different; you are still young; you have a wife and family who will take a pride and pleasure in seeing you ennobled, and this will be a true happiness to you, for no man has worked harder for their sakes than you have. My best and kindest wishes attend you.

Very sincerely yours,  
COLIN CAMPBELL.

There were many men who prognosticated for Sir John Lawrence, and that too at no distant date, higher things even than the Peerage. It had been rumoured that Lord Canning, partly, as the result of the change of Ministry in England, and, partly, owing to the prolonged strain of the Mutiny—a strain which must have told all the more upon him, inasmuch as, with all his noble qualities, he was wanting in one of the most essential for a Governor-General at such times, the power of rapidly despatching work—would not serve out his time; and the eyes and thoughts of many, soldiers as well as statesmen, turned instinctively to the man who, broken down in health though he was, had done the work of both soldier and statesman, and, during the recent crisis, had practically ruled so large a part of India.

But Sir John Lawrence's own eyes and inclinations, as we have seen, were turned in quite another direction. The *heimweh*, the yearning to see wife and children from whom he had so long been separated; the yearning for repose—that word of which he could hardly be said to know the meaning, for he had not tasted it for sixteen years past—were strong upon him. Above all, the threatening of congestion of the brain, his total inability at times even to collect his thoughts, told him in language which was not to be mistaken, that if he hoped ever to be able to work hard again, he must take rest at once.

'I will go home,' Sir John Lawrence used often to say in conversation, 'and turn grazier or farmer in some quiet corner.' Nevertheless, the bare idea of greater work to be done and wider responsibility to be faced, acted upon him at times as does a cordial on the worn-out mountaineer who, having fancied that, on topping an eminence, he will have reached his destination, finds that it still lies many a weary climb onward, and that he has to start afresh.

I am sorry for Lord Canning (he says to Montgomery), and hope he may weather the storm. I have no wish to be Governor-General, though I would not refuse if the post were offered to me. Home and a moderate pension would suit me much better. I am getting old and stiff and do not feel that I am half the man I formerly was. You appear to be 'an evergreen.'

Meanwhile, Lord Canning, hearing of Sir John Lawrence's approaching departure, had written a letter, in which he expressed, in the warmest terms, his regret for the temporary loss of his 'invaluable assistance and support,' and begged for his frank opinion as to the claims of various possible successors—Montgomery, Edwardes, Frere, and others.

This gave Sir John Lawrence a free field; and the result was one of those vigorous yet impartial characterisations, such as we have often seen him giving to Lord Dalhousie.

As regards my successor, I would strongly recommend that Mr. Montgomery be the man. He knows the country and the people. He is liked and respected by both European officers and the natives, and is, I am sure, the very best selection that could be made. There can be no question as to the relative importance of the Punjab and Oude. Moreover, arrangements for the management of Oude are, to my mind, feasible by which Montgomery could be spared. The work of the Punjab is at present too much for Montgomery. It is too much for any officer, if it be done properly. But here again a change will not be difficult.

I had always hoped that Lord Dalhousie's proposal to make the Punjab a Lieutenant-Governorship would have been sanctioned. Even when the Home authorities demurred, I expected that a little explanation would have removed the difficulty. It was not done, and I did not think it proper to move in the matter. Now, however, that the allowances of a Lieutenant-Governor have been given me, and that I am about to go away—perhaps for good—I do not think that my motives can be misunderstood, when I urge that this measure be carried out. The additional expense will be trifling, while the relief to the chief officer will be great. It will save much paper work and many 'references,' and afford leisure for important work. The additional Staff at the disposal of a Lieutenant-Governor relieves him of much petty correspondence, which, however, is of such a nature that it must be attended to. . . .

With these changes, and the transfer of the new Punjab corps to the Commander-in-Chief, Mr. Montgomery will find his post as agreeable as it will be honourable. Without such changes, I despair of any officer being found equal to its demands. I have had peculiar advantages. I have been in the Punjab now for nearly twelve years, and everything connected with the administration has grown up under me. If I have broken down under the work, I think it may be fairly assumed that a modification of the system is necessary. Montgomery is an



officer much more suited for the administration of a new country, than for a Council. He is a man of action rather than of deliberation. In Calcutta he will be thrown away. With the improved position in the Punjab, and the certainty that I would not return, I am sure he would prefer the post to Calcutta, or to Oude.

If Montgomery comes to the Punjab, an officer for Oude will be required. I do not think your Lordship will find a better one than Mr. George Barnes, the present Commissioner of the Cis-Sutlej Division. Barnes is an officer of great ability, and of extensive and varied civil experiences. He is peculiarly qualified to deal with the difficult subject of the landed tenures in Oude, which I consider will be the main difficulty in tranquillising that province. He has temper, tact, and a kindly sympathy towards the natives, while there is no want of vigour in him.

Macleod and Thornton are both able men, but neither of them is well suited to be the chief civil authority in a new country. Both would be content and happy with Montgomery as their Chief, whereas neither would be so well satisfied with Barnes, Edwardes, or Frere over them.

I come now to Colonel Edwardes and Mr. Frere. The former is an officer of great capacity. Whatever he does, is done well. But he never received any regular training as a civil officer and has not the faculty of rapidly disposing of public business. Edwardes, in short, is a better political than civil officer. With due training in his youth, he would have done credit to any post in India.

Next to Montgomery, I think Mr. Frere would probably make the best civil governor for the Punjab. I do not know him personally, but he bears a high character for administrative ability. The objections to him appear to me to be these. He is a Bombay civilian, and therefore would be hardly so acceptable to Bengali officers as one of this Presidency. He has no knowledge of the Sikhs nor of the Punjab system of administration, and his policy, as regards the frontier tribes and chiefs beyond our frontier, would, I believe, be different to that which we have hitherto pursued. In all these points, he would not answer, I think, so well as Montgomery. With the latter in the Punjab, Edmonstone in the North-West, and Barnes in Oude, I venture to believe that your Lordship would do well. I have now written to your Lordship as freely and unreservedly as possible. I have omitted nothing which strikes me as of any importance.

Finding how hard-pressed his lieutenant was, Lord Canning did all he could to make his position more tolerable during the few months which remained. He begged him at once to appoint a Private Secretary, and to add any other officer to his Staff who would ease his labours. The boon was one which might have been conferred upon him with advantage at any time during the last eight years, and, would, no doubt, have been conferred willingly had John Lawrence, in

his insatiable hunger for work, cared to press his claims for relief. The long-talked-of change, too, in the administration of the Punjab, which had been advocated by Lord Dalhousie before his departure, was, at last, carried out ; and the first ' Chief Commissioner ' of the Punjab, passed, as of indubitable right, into the position of its first ' Lieutenant-Governor.' The change was made too late for Sir John Lawrence himself to profit much by it. But it was an honourable distinction, and was made more honourable still by the arrangement which was now formally sanctioned that the Delhi district should be included in the new Lieutenant-Governorship ; the district which Sir John Lawrence had saved to the Empire, under such unparalleled difficulties, and had, in earlier life, administered with such notable success.

Sir John Lawrence left Murri early in October. He had been there throughout the hot season ; for the remonstrances of Richard Temple, who was working for him at Lahore, had prevented his coming down thither at a time when the heat might, very probably, have been fatal to him. ' I gather,' writes Temple, ' that you are thinking of coming down to Lahore. As one of your strongest friends, I entreat you not to do so. Remember your illness in 1854. You are not quite well at present, I fear. Your coming down here is not necessary. It will only make you ill, and *cui bono* ? All that can be done shall be done, though with our Financial Commissioner things must go more or less wrong. But even your Highness' presence will not improve him !'

From Murri, Sir John Lawrence went to Peshawur, held many conferences there on sanitary and other matters with Cotton and Edwardes, visited several of the frontier forts, wrote his final memorandum on the abandonment of Peshawur, and read aloud to the Peshawur troops, who had been paraded for the purpose, the proclamation of the Queen on assuming the direct government of India.

Leaving Peshawur, Sir John Lawrence went to Sealkote and took the opportunity of paying a first and last state visit to Runbeer Sing, the new Maharaja of Kashmere at Jummoo. Many public meetings and one ' very private ' interview by night took place between the two potentates.

Rumour had been flying about, supported by something like written evidence, that communications dangerous to us had been passing and repassing between Jung Bahadur, the able and powerful Minister of Nepal, the Maharaja of Kashmere, and the Ameer of Cabul. Dost Mohammed, nettled at the stopping of his subsidy, had come down, as it was supposed, with no friendly intentions, to Jellalabad; Runbeer Sing was inexperienced and lacked the political wisdom or astuteness of his father; while Jung Bahadur, as we knew well, held a trump card in his hand in the person of the ex-Maharani of Lahore, who was under his guardianship at Katmandu, and if only it had suited his purpose to 'play' her in the Mutiny, when Sir John Lawrence had sent his last available Europeans to the Ridge, things might have gone very differently with us there. He had given us some valuable assistance at Lucknow. But there was reason to think that his head had been somewhat turned thereby. The combination, therefore, did not even now seem to be beyond the range of possibility. But Sir John came away from his night interview with Runbeer firmly impressed with the belief that no danger was to be apprehended from that quarter. And here, perhaps, I may best tell an anecdote which shows how entirely, to the native mind, Sir John Lawrence represented and summed up, as it were, the Punjab, and indeed the British Government, throughout the period of the Mutiny.

I was (said J. H. Batten to me) Judge at Cawnpore in 1858, and when the army came back thither after Sir Colin Campbell's final success at Lucknow, the Nepalese chief, Jung Bahadur, came through the station on his way to pay his respects to the Viceroy at Allahabad. I was an old friend of Jung, and had seen a great deal of him at Kumaon when I was Commissioner there, having received him when he visited my territory to wash away his London and Paris sins amidst the snows and sacred shrines of the Himalayas, on his return from Europe. We now had a great deal of private talk together on public matters, and I was amused at the airs he gave himself as the real conqueror of Lucknow. But I was also much interested by all he told me of the Mutiny politics among the great native chieftains, and how he had remained loyal to the English and had kept others so. One of his speeches to me was, 'You see I remained *sidha* (straight and true), and that was useful to your government in very bad times.' I said, 'Suppose you had not remained loyal, what would you have done?' 'Why,' said he, 'I would have let down the Maharani of Lahore on *Jan Larens*, and then what would

England have done?' I told this to Sir John Lawrence at Simla in 1864, and he said that Jung overrated his power, but that the Maharani would have been an 'awfully troublesome customer' in the Punjab.

The danger of 'the triple alliance' being over, Sir John Lawrence sent in his final application for leave of absence for fifteen months, to begin from January 1, 1859. He could now do so with a tolerably easy mind. 'The whole country,' he says to Lord Canning, 'from end to end is as quiet as possible. Indeed, I never recollect to have seen the people so loyal and contented. The change at Peshawur, in this respect, since my last visit, is quite remarkable. In the interior of the country I have no apprehensions.' There was only one danger ahead, and this he lost no opportunity of impressing upon Lord Canning, upon his successor Montgomery, and upon Lord Stanley at home—the enormous number of Punjabi troops.

Happily, before many days were over, Sir John Lawrence was able, to his 'infinite satisfaction'—for he felt that the safety of the Empire might turn upon it—to announce in his letters to his friends that Lord Canning had consented to make a gradual and progressive reduction of the Punjabi troops; and, by Christmas, he had returned to Lahore to make his final arrangements for his departure from India. But Montgomery could not be spared from Oude till towards the end of February. So the Chief Commissioner, despite the earnest recommendations of his doctors, clung gallantly to his post till he was relieved. The short delay enabled him to take a leading part in an event of much importance to the future of his province.

On February 8, in the presence of some 200 native chiefs and gentry, who had flocked thither from various parts of the province to bid him farewell and to witness the spectacle, in presence also of a vast crowd of natives of all castes and races, the first sod of the first Punjab railway was turned by its first Lieutenant-Governor. It was fitting enough that a step which was likely to form such an epoch in the history of the Punjab, so to stimulate its energies, to develop its resources, to double its security, should be presided over by the man who, in conjunction with his illustrious brother, had been connected with it from the earliest days of British

ascendency, had brought order out of anarchy, and turned War and Poverty into, comparatively speaking, Peace and Plenty. The railway was to connect Umritsur and Lahore with Mooltan, a distance of 240 miles, and being carried on simultaneously, as was then hoped, with the improvement of steam navigation on the Indus, and with the construction of another railway from Kotri to Kurrachi, would bring the Punjab a fortnight nearer to England, and connect it immediately with the sea, the true basis of our military operations and the best security for our frontier. The silver shovel presented to John Lawrence for the occasion bore on it the motto, equally appropriate to the railway and to the man who turned its first sod—'*Tam bello quam pace*;' and it was observed by the on-lookers that a deep dint was made in the metal by one of Sir John's vigorous strokes, as, with main strength, he filled the barrow with virgin soil. At almost any period of his career he could have done the muscular work of a navvy as well as the brain work of the ruler of a province. A year or two later the Chairman of some Parliamentary Committee on Indian affairs happened to ask him if he did not consider that it would be difficult to do much injury to a railway in a short interval. He replied that if he had a good crowbar and an hour or two to himself he thought he could do a little mischief; and the on-lookers remarked that he gave the answer as though he longed to try the experiment!

On February 25, Montgomery arrived. Sir John Lawrence handed over the government to him with no unwilling heart, and, on the following morning, left Lahore, not to return to it till he was to come thither in all the pomp and splendour of Governor-General of India. From Mithancote he sailed down the Indus, and as a mark of his high displeasure, steamed, without slackening speed, right by the Nawab of Bahawalpore, who, to his certain knowledge, had been disposed to play us false in the Mutiny, but had now, after the manner of his kind, come down in state to the river bank, to greet the conqueror. At Hyderabad, he spent some days with Bartle Frere, the Chief Commissioner of Scinde, who had given him such timely and unstinted aid in the struggle. With his usual hospitality, Frere had contemplated entertaining his distinguished guest at a public dinner at Kurrachi

and had made preparations accordingly. But time pressed. Sir John Lawrence yearned to be at home. And this yearning, coupled, I believe, with the knowledge that he would be made a 'lion' of, and have to make a speech, served to quicken his departure, and he set sail, at last, for Bombay and England. 'Your name and services,' said Lord Stanley in one of his last letters to him, 'are in everyone's mouth. Be prepared for such a reception in England as no one has had for twenty years.'

## CHAPTER XXIV.

### HOME LIFE IN ENGLAND.

FEBRUARY 1859—DECEMBER 1863.

SIR JOHN LAWRENCE was met in Paris by his wife and his two eldest daughters. He spent a few days there, and his friend, Arthur Brandreth, who had accompanied him from India, has recorded how a threat, uttered in joke, that he would apprise the Mayor of Dover of his approach, excited the ire of his unostentatious and simple-hearted companion. Accordingly, he managed to cross the Channel unobserved, thus escaping the embarrassing attentions of the crowd on the Dover Pier, and the conventional address at the Lord Warden, and he made his way, without let or hindrance, to the house in London—16 Montague Square—which had been occupied for some time past by his wife and his sister Letitia. It was a happy family meeting, after fifteen years of separation. But many changes had taken place in the interval. The old mother had died, the old Clifton home, with its associations, had been broken up, the sister had become a widow. Of course, his arrival in London could not be kept a secret. He reported himself at once, as in duty bound, at the India House, and was warmly received by the authorities there, not least by his new chief, Lord Stanley. Addresses of congratulation poured in upon him. Deputations from various public bodies, civil and religious, were anxious to greet him in person. Any public meeting, at which there was a chance of his being present, was sure to be crowded by a large audience, anxious, not so much to support the cause, as to catch a sight—like the Romans of old on the return

of Scipio from Spain—of the rugged features of the man who had done so much to save our Empire in the East. When he had left England seventeen years before, he was unknown by name to anyone beyond the small circle of his relations and friends. Now, as Lord Stanley had said, 'his name and achievements were in everybody's mouth.'

On June 3, the Freedom of the City, which had been awarded him in the previous year, was formally conferred upon him in the presence of a brilliant assemblage, and he was able—as he had expressed a hope, that he should be able to do, in the middle of his anxieties in India—to stand in the Guildhall and thank the court in person 'for the honour conferred upon him.

If ancient Rome (said the spokesman of the Corporation) in the plenitude of her power, could justly boast of the two illustrious sons of Cornelia, surely Britain may view with pride, in the persons of Henry and John Lawrence, the recurrence of one of those parallels which history occasionally reproduces. Vain is the endeavour, in the compass of a few brief sentences, to describe the unerring foresight, the admirable promptitude, the indomitable firmness, and the untiring energy displayed by you in trampling out the smouldering embers of disaffection within your own province, enabling you to organise and to furnish those numerous levies, which contributed to the capture of Delhi, and the consequent maintenance of our supremacy in British India. Fortunately for myself, the task is as superfluous as it is impracticable, for History has already recorded this brilliant chapter of our Indian Annals, and has conferred upon you the titles of 'Organiser of Victory' and 'Saviour of British India.'

More than half of Sir John Lawrence's reply was a just and warm tribute to the services of the elder of the two 'Gracchi,' his brother, Sir Henry. Of himself he said very little, and that little only that he might dwell upon the services of his lieutenants, and might ask again for their still delayed reward.

Regarding myself, it becomes me to say but little. If I was placed in a position of extreme danger and difficulty, I was also fortunate in having around me some of the ablest civil and military officers in India. In times of peace we had worked so as to be prepared for times of commotion and danger. We had laboured to introduce into a new country order, law, and system. Our object had been to improve the condition of the people, and obtain their goodwill and sympathies, and hence it happened that, by God's help, we were able to meet the storm which



must otherwise have overwhelmed us all. I have received honours and distinctions from my sovereign. I have been welcomed by my countrymen of all classes, since my return home, with consideration—I may say with affection. But I hope that some rewards will, even yet, be extended to those who so nobly shared with me the perils of the struggle, and by whose aid my efforts to maintain the supremacy of my country were crowned with success.

On June 24, in Willis's Rooms, in the presence of another enthusiastic assembly, Sir John Lawrence received an address which, though it was primarily intended to support his religious policy, as indicated in the despatch I have already quoted, also passed under review the whole of his services, and, if we take into consideration the character and number of those who signed it, may be said to have borne a truly national character. It was signed by upwards of 8,000 persons, including the 3 Archbishops, 20 Bishops, 28 members of the House of Lords, 71 of the House of Commons, 300 Lord Mayors and Mayors, Lord Provosts and Provosts.

The Universities were as eager as other public bodies to testify to their sense of his services. He received from both Oxford and Cambridge, during the summer of this year, the honorary degrees of D.C.L. and L.L.D. at their great annual Commemorations.

Socially, Sir John Lawrence was 'the lion' of the London season. A friend, whose graphic reminiscences of him, as a rough young civilian on his first furlough, I have quoted in full, says :—

I thought I had never seen anything more noble than his whole air and manner when he returned from the Mutiny. It bore the impress of the greatness of character which had won for him the name of the 'Saviour of India.' At that time he was the hero of the day. It was the fashion to fête him. The Queen and all the nobility vied in showing him every attention, but he retained his perfect simplicity of manners and tastes, a little modified from the roughness of his early days.

Sir John Lawrence was invited to Windsor as soon as he arrived in England, and was treated with marked distinction by his royal hosts. He was not, by nature, a courtier. Simple in his habits, careless of his dress, popular in his sympathies, free or even blunt of speech, a Court atmosphere

would not have been one in which he could long breathe freely. He was impatient of the trammels and constraints even of ordinary English society; and, in India, his disregard of the conventionalities of life, even in the free air of a non-regulation province, had often occasioned amusement and surprise. There were therefore those among his friends who looked with interest, not unmixed with anxiety, to his first appearance at the English Court. The man who, it will be remembered, had, in a moment of pre-occupation mislaid and lost the Koh-i-noor, and whom not all the instructions of the Court costumier could prevail upon to pin his orders on in their right places, was not unlikely to be forgetful of some of the ceremonial proper to the occasion. But all went off well.

That a man whose merits were so universally acknowledged as those of Sir John Lawrence was not raised at once to the peerage, was a cause of as much surprise in England as it had been in India. The general dissatisfaction found expression in that great safety-valve of English discontent, a letter to the 'Times.' In particular, I notice one letter with the well-known signature of 'Arthur Kinnaid,' pointing out, that the Baronetcy which had just been conferred upon Sir John Lawrence had been offered to him as long ago as the time of Lord Dalhousie; a year, that is, before the Mutiny broke out, and had therefore been earned by his previous services. And, in an able leading article on the same subject, I notice that the raising by the outgoing Government of three mediocrities to the peerage, furnished the writer with a text on which he was not slow to make the appropriate comment:—

Let us be thankful that still England is nobly served, though she knows not how suitably to reward those who nobly serve her; and let us console ourselves with the reflection that the loss is not on the side of Sir John Lawrence. For though his name would add much to the lustre of the peerage, the peerage can add nothing to the lustre of his name.

One additional honour, however, which I may mention here, was still in store for him. After prolonged discussion, in which the Queen and Prince Albert had taken great personal interest, all the details for the institution of a new Order of Knighthood, to be called the 'Order of the Star of

India,' were completed. It was to consist of twenty-five knights, European and Native, the Sovereign being the Grand Master. The first investiture took place at Windsor Castle on November 1, 1861, and, on that day, Sir John Lawrence received, in company with his old friend Lord Clyde, with the Maharaja Duleep Sing, with General Pollock and with Lord Harris, the beautiful insignia of the new Order. They consist of a double star of rays of gold and diamonds, resting on a light blue enamelled riband, and inscribed with the appropriate motto—for it is the motto of universal religion—'Heaven's light our guide.' The collar consists of the lotus of India and of palm branches tied together; while the badge of the Order is an onyx cameo of the Queen's head.

His duties at the India Office made it necessary that he should be in or near London; but simple and domestic in all his tastes, and hating ostentation with a perfect hatred, he determined to be as little as possible of it. All that was valuable in London society of course he would retain. All that was worldly, or frivolous, or worse would float by him. With his sister, Mrs. Hayes, there had been living for some time past the young daughter of Sir Henry Lawrence, a girl who, even then, showed something of her father's exuberant energy and heart; and it was determined that, as soon as a convenient residence could be found, the two households should form one family.

In August, Sir John Lawrence, having initiated himself into his new work at the India Office, took his first holiday; a holiday which no one living had more fairly earned, and, accompanied by his wife and his four eldest children, went for a tour in Ireland. They visited Killarney, traversed the wilds of Connemara, stayed with Lady Lawrence's two brothers in the North, took a last look at the home of her childhood, which had now passed into the hands of strangers, and at Dublin, on their way home, paid a visit to Lord Cardwell. By Christmas, a house large enough to accommodate the whole party had been found in Upper Hyde Park Gardens. The mysteries of furnishing and house-keeping, so formidable to those who have lived all their lives in India under conditions wholly different, had been, in some measure, solved, and Sir John Lawrence found

himself in the full enjoyment of that for which he had sighed during many a long year in India—a home of his own, with his favourite sister and all his children gathered round him. In the society of his sister he seemed to renew his youth, consulting her, as of old, in everything, and having long talks with her every evening over her bedroom fire. His health improved rapidly, and it seemed as though India would, after all, have no permanently bad effect on his constitution.

The late summer months were spent at Worthing, and during his children's holidays Sir John Lawrence gave himself up entirely to them. He took part in all their amusements, especially in the now almost extinct game of croquet, a game in which he was an adept. In the afternoons, he would take the two eldest boys and girls for long and rapid rides to Arundel or elsewhere, he leading the way and they keeping up, as best they could. When the holidays were over, he paid a long-planned visit to his birthplace, the little town of Richmond in Yorkshire. He felt or fancied—as well perhaps he might—that his career was over, and he seemed to have a yearning to look once more upon the hills which had given him birth.

From Richmond he went to Inveraray Castle as the guest of the Duke and Duchess of Argyll, and the friendships formed or cemented there ended only with death. In the Duke, he found a man who was prepared to sympathise with him in most or in all of his views on Indian affairs, and who, besides his other splendid gifts, was pre-eminently strong in that in which Sir John Lawrence always felt and always deplored that he was weak, the faculty of expressing himself by word of mouth, on all occasions, in language which was ready, clear, and eloquent. What the Duke of Argyll thought, then and ever afterwards, of his illustrious guest is well known. But I cannot refrain from quoting here a single sentence from one of the most vigorous of his speeches on the abandonment of Candahar, which probably gives the gist of the whole. 'Of all the great Indian authorities,' said the Duke, 'with whom I have been brought into contact, there is not one who for solidity of judgment, for breadth of view, for strength and simplicity of character is, in my judgment, to be compared with Lord Lawrence.'

From Inveraray he went down to Glasgow, that he might receive the Freedom of the City, passing on the way through a country which must have seemed familiar enough to so keen a lover of Sir Walter Scott. There was, as I have already had occasion to remark, a good deal of the Scotchman in John Lawrence's character, and he valued the Freedom of the commercial metropolis of Scotland as something more than a mere compliment.

The birth of a daughter in June of this year had given a new interest to the home life which was just beginning. But it was a short-lived happiness enough. It will be remembered how, nine years before, Sir John Lawrence had been struck down by the loss of his infant child at Lahore. The true tenderness of the man came out in his dealings with children, especially with very young children. There was no roughness at all then. 'Scratch the Russian,' it has been said, 'and you will find the Tartar.' Of Sir John Lawrence exactly the opposite might be said, 'Scratch him skin-deep and you will find him to be all tenderness.' His roughness was, in fact, skin-deep, and not always that. In the February following its birth the child sickened and died, to the sore distress of its parents; and Sir John, thinking that country air would be better for his other children, determined to leave London and seek a home elsewhere. The influence of Sir Herbert Edwardes and his wife led him to Southgate, and here, for three years, he enjoyed a peace and domesticity which is often denied to Londoners.

Southgate House was an old-fashioned country house large enough to contain his sister and his niece as well as his own family; and it had a good garden and some sixty acres of ground attached to it. Amidst the anxieties of his last year in India, he had often been heard to exclaim, 'I will go home and turn farmer,' and now he was able to do so on a small scale. He cut himself adrift altogether from London gaieties, and gave himself up to country life. Of his fondness for horses I have often spoken, and now he was able, to his great delight, to keep cows, sheep, pigs, and poultry. He knew each animal intimately, and his dry humour came out abundantly in the names he gave to each, hitting off, to a nicety, its individual character. A pig or a sheep was allotted

to each child, which, when it had been fattened at the father's expense, but with the child's care, was duly repurchased by its original owner ; and so the interest of the children in the live stock was almost as great as his own. His summer evenings spent in croquet ; his Saturday afternoon family drives in the neighbourhood ; his Sunday afternoon progressès round his farm ; the Sunday evening family readings of the ' Pilgrim's Progress ' and the family repetition of a hymn ; and then, to finish all, some thrilling story of his early Indian adventures—' a hunt, a robbery, or a murder,' told as few but he could have told it, to his large-eyed wondering audience—such were the simple pleasures of his home life.

He took great interest in politics, but he was, in no sense of the word, and at no time of his life, a party man. His sympathies were always with freedom, with progress, with the masses ; but he judged every question on its own merits, never taking up a party cry because it was the cry of the party. In the complicated Russo-Turkish question for instance—at a period when I knew him well—he was far too well-informed and clear-sighted to identify himself with the views of either of the extreme parties in England. He knew the faults of each system of government or no-government too well to constitute himself the champion of either. He never anathematised the Turks as a nation, for what he knew to be, in a great measure, the result of the vices of their rulers. Still less did he look upon the Russians—as it was the fashion in some circles to do—as the enlightened and disinterested champions of oppressed races. He would never have stood up for Turkish misrule, or the integrity and independence of the Ottoman Empire, because, from certain narrow points of view, it seemed to be to our advantage to do so. But still less did he think that a people so grossly misgoverned and so backward as the Russians had a right to plunge half a continent into war in order to compel the Turks to govern better. In a word, he looked at the question from both sides and formed an independent and equitable judgment upon it.

In the American Civil War, which was raging during his residence at Southgate, he took a keen interest, and here he was, throughout, on the side of the North. At that time

there were some leading Liberals who felt otherwise. But Sir John Lawrence felt convinced from the beginning that though the motives of the Northerners might not be pure, yet the inevitable result of the struggle would, if they were successful, be the emancipation of the Negro; if unsuccessful, his prolonged enslavement. In the history and progress of the United States he had always taken a deep interest, and he often expressed his regret that a life of unceasing labour in the East had made it impossible for him to visit the great Republic in the West.

‘His religious faith,’ says she who knew him best, ‘was the most beautiful and simple I have ever known. “Fear God and keep His commandments” was the rule of his daily life. We used to read the Bible together every day, and I have now by me the large-print volumes he used latterly, with his marks at the different passages which particularly interested him.’

But while Sir John Lawrence’s domestic life and enjoyments were such as I have described them, he was also working steadily, day by day, at the Indian Council. It was work somewhat different, both in degree and in kind, from that with which he had been familiar for thirty years past in India. Unfriendly critics indeed of the Indian Council have spoken of their work as ‘laborious idleness.’ But, as a matter of fact, it was then, as it is now, work of real interest; and it involved then, to a degree which it is impossible that it can do now, the discussion of changes of fundamental importance—nothing less, in fact, than the reconstruction of the shaken fabric of our Indian Empire.

The first meeting of the newly formed Council had taken place in the autumn of 1858. It contained a fair mixture of old names and new, of Conservatives and of Reformers. Among them were men so well known in Indian circles as Hogg, Mills, Mangles, Prinsep, Eastwick, Willoughby, Cautley, Macnaghten, and Rawlinson. Lord Stanley was, of course, the President, and Sir Frederick Currie was selected by him as Vice-President. Sir John Lawrence took his seat at the Council Board on April 11 of the following year—very soon, that is, after his return from India.

The accidents of political life in England had soon deprived Sir John Lawrence of the pleasure and satisfaction of serving

under Lord Stanley; for, on Saturday, June 11, 1859, exactly three months after Sir John had taken his seat, the short-lived Conservative Ministry were defeated in the House of Commons by a majority of thirteen. Lord Derby at once resigned. On June 14, his son Lord Stanley took his leave of the Indian Council.

Lord Stanley was succeeded by Sir Charles Wood, who, as President of the Board of Control, had been author of the famous Education Despatch of 1854. He was now called back to the helm with fuller power and less divided responsibility, but at a period of almost unexampled difficulty. Lord Stanley had been unable, with all his energy and insight, to carry through, in his very short tenure of office, many measures of the first importance. Everything in India was in disorder, and almost everything needed reconstruction. The arrangements for the Councils of the Governor-General and of the Minor Presidencies, the construction of New Courts of Judicature, the resettlement of the taxes, the re-organisation of the finances, the creation of a paper currency, the codification of the law, above all, the amalgamation of the Queen's with the old 'local' European army in India, and the reconciliation of conflicting interests of every kind—these were some of the questions which had to be solved by the new Secretary of State with the help of his newly formed Council. It was fortunate for India that Sir Charles Wood was a man who cared nothing for popularity and was familiar with all the details of Indian administration; that he was ready to hear all that was to be said on both sides of a question, and was prepared to throw himself, heart and soul, into the stimulating task of remodelling and governing an empire. It is impossible here to give any account of his great measures. Of some few of them I shall have to say something hereafter. In many or, in most of them he was warmly supported by Sir John Lawrence; and only on the question of the retention or abolition of the old local European Army, does there appear to have been any strong difference of opinion. Justly proud of what the soldiers of the Company had done, the whole weight of the old Indians in the Council was brought to bear in favour of its preservation. But the little known, though highly dangerous 'White Mutiny' as



it was called, which took place in that Army when they were somewhat cavalierly transferred from the service of the Company to that of the Crown, determined the Government to discontinue the force. The question depended on the Queen's Government and not on the Indian Council. But in order to meet the wishes of his Council, who were anxious to leave their opinions on record, Sir Charles Wood laid before them a letter, which necessarily implied the discontinuance of the force. Sir John Lawrence spoke strongly in favour of its retention, and on a division as to sending the letter, the numbers were equally divided. Sir Charles Wood gave the casting vote.

Lord Canning when he came home from India in 1862 came home, like his great predecessor Lord Dalhousie—to die. Long before he left India, his noble character had come to be appreciated, even by those who, in the crisis of the Mutiny, had most maligned and misunderstood him. And there was now no honour which the people of England and of India—even those who, under the influence of panic, had clamoured most fiercely for his recall—would have thought to be beyond his deserts. But, broken down by anxiety, by work, by disease, and most of all, perhaps, by the loss of his equally noble-hearted wife, the only honour which he received, the only honour which he would have cared to receive, was an early grave in Westminster Abbey; and within a few weeks of his arrival, an illustrious son was laid by the side of a hardly more illustrious father.

It had been generally expected that the man who, all were agreed, was by his experience and his past services pre-eminently entitled to succeed Lord Canning, the man who, though he differed from him much in aptitudes, and in temperament, resembled him in his highest quality of all, his moral courage and his resistance to the passions of the hour, would be selected to fill his place. But this was not to be. The choice of the Ministry fell upon Lord Elgin, a man of proved capacity, who, had he succeeded a few years earlier to the post, would certainly have proved a worthy link in the rarely broken chain of great men who have been called to rule India. That his promise at the time of his appointment was high, no one can doubt who collects the services which he had rendered to England in

Jamaica, in Canada, and in China. But the Fates were against him. His working days were over; and before the second year of his Viceroyalty had passed, he was attacked with a fatal illness while traversing the Himalayas at a point 12,000 feet above the sea.

And, now, who was to succeed him? A traditionary maxim, which had come almost to have the force of law, had been handed down from the days when Mr. Canning was President of the Board of Control, that hardly any concurrence of circumstances could justify the Company in appointing one of their own servants to the highest dignity in their gift. With the one exception of Sir John Shore, no civilian since the time of Warren Hastings had been appointed to that splendid office; for Sir George Barlow and Sir Charles Metcalfe, who had filled it temporarily, had not been allowed to retain it in permanence. It was part and parcel of the same general understanding that the Governor-General must be a Peer of the realm and must have risen to something like political distinction at home or in the colonies. Obedient to this unwritten law, the ministry of Lord Palmerston had passed over what many thought to be the superlative claims of John Lawrence, while the laurels of the Mutiny were still fresh upon his brow, and had chosen Lord Elgin in his stead. Why should they think differently now?

Possibly, even now, the names of one and of another candidate who possessed the conventional qualifications may have occurred to Sir Charles Wood. But the fate of the three preceding Governors-General, who had followed one another, with such startling rapidity, to their last home, seemed like a warning to English statesmen that 'the paths of glory'—of Indian glory at least—'lead but to the grave.' Possibly, Ministers themselves shrunk from asking anyone who had not been acclimatised to India to accept so deadly an honour. More probably they agreed in thinking, and, not least amongst them, Sir Charles Wood himself, who knew him best, that the claims of Sir John Lawrence were now superlative, and that no more fitting tribute could be offered to the splendid history of the just-extinguished East India Company, than to break through precedent and raise to the Viceroyalty the most illustrious of

its servants. In any case, it is understood that what clenched the appointment beyond the possibility of doubt was, the fact that a border war which had broken out against the fanatics of Sitana on the North-West frontier and an adjoining Afghan tribe seemed to be assuming dangerous dimensions, that Sir Neville Chamberlain had received a check, and that it was likely that the flame of revolt would spread from one warlike tribe to another. Who so fit to deal with this particular danger, who so certain to preserve the peace, as the man who had tamed and conciliated the warlike races of the Punjab, and whose name was a household word, regarded, sometimes with love, sometimes with fear, but always with awe and veneration, by each wild chief of each wild tribe along the dangerous frontier of six hundred miles?

In any case, on the morning of November 30, 1863, Sir Charles Wood looked into Sir John Lawrence's room at the India Office with the pregnant announcement, 'You are to go to India as Governor-General. Wait here till I return from Windsor with the Queen's approval.' It was not till long after office hours that Sir Charles returned with the warm approval which he had sought and had obtained; and now the 'imperial appointment, which is the greatest honour England has to give, except the government of herself,' belonged to John Lawrence.

## CHAPTER XXV.

JOHN LAWRENCE AS VICEROY OF INDIA. 1864.

THE appointment of Sir John Lawrence was received with a chorus of approbation by all parties in the State and by newspapers of every shade of opinion in England. The 'Times,' which, on such a matter, we may safely take as the gauge of the universal feeling, said—

It has been happily determined to break through the charmed circle which has so long restricted the office of Governor-General to the Peerage, and to send out to the Empire which was formed by the exertions of Robert Clive and Warren Hastings, not only a commoner, but a commoner wholly unconnected with any family of the English aristocracy. The person, however, on whom the choice of the Government has rested is a man stamped by the hand of Nature with the truest impress of nobility, and though not born to inherit aristocratic titles, is peculiarly calculated to create them. Everyone will recognise from this description that the new Governor-General of India is Sir John Lawrence.

Letters crowded in upon him from men of all parties, all taking the same view, that his appointment was no triumph of one party over another—for Sir John Lawrence never was a party man—but of merit over all party. Lord Shaftesbury, who had always held himself aloof from all mere party movements, and had found higher and nobler work by doing so, wrote to the new Governor-General thus:—'At last Government has recognised your merits, and you are about, God be praised, to enter upon the grand career for which you are so eminently fitted.' One who would have felt no special sympathy with the religious views either of Lord Shaftesbury or of Sir John Lawrence, the late Bishop Wilberforce, was equally delighted:

'Unfeignedly,' he writes, 'do I rejoice in the great act of policy and justice which has placed in your hands the destinies of India. May God enable you to do as He has enabled you to do before !'

'Among the multitude of affairs and congratulations,' wrote Florence Nightingale, 'which will be pouring in upon you, there is no more fervent joy, there are no stronger good wishes, than those of one of the humblest of your servants. For there is no greater position for usefulness under heaven than that of governing the vast empire you saved for us. And you are the only man to fill it. So thought a statesman with whom I worked not daily, but hourly, for five years, Sidney Herbert, when the last appointment was made. In the midst of your pressure pray think of us and of our sanitary things on which such millions of lives and health depend.'

The native Indian newspapers were as jubilant over the appointment as were the English, but the Anglo-Indian press was, naturally, more divided in its views. Some complained of the new Viceroy as a commoner, others as a civilian, others as a Punjabi, others as a proselytiser and a Puritan, others again as a Dalhousie-ite, who would be likely to reverse Lord Canning's policy and return to the 'era of annexations.' But, generally speaking, all ended up by a frank acknowledgment of his eminent qualifications for the post, his honesty, his energy, and his courage ; his long Indian experience ; his successful administration of the Punjab ; his unique services in the Mutiny ; his knowledge of the country, of the people, of the languages, of the requirements of India generally, and of the policy which, at that particular juncture, ought to be pursued.

Sir John Lawrence landed in Calcutta on January 12, 1864, and received a warm greeting from vast crowds of Europeans and of natives. The cheers of the sailors on the shipping as he steamed up the Hooghly, the unauthorised cheers of the soldiers on parade when his arrival was announced to them in a General Order, showed clearly enough what they thought of their new ruler. Asiatics are not demonstrative. But the first sight of the man of whom they had heard so much, and, but for whom, many of them believed that the Mutiny might have been successful, stirred

something almost akin to emotion in the Bengali heart, and showed itself even in their outward bearing. The new Viceroy was received in the usual manner at Government House by Sir William Denison, the Governor of Madras, who had been summoned to Calcutta to bridge over the interregnum, and who, though he had only recently been sent to India from a remote dependency, had won considerable credit by the presence of mind which he had shown during the anxieties of the Umbeylah campaign.

The disadvantages under which a Viceroy labours who has risen from the ranks of the Civil Service are obvious enough, and I shall often have occasion to refer to them. Even if he is supported loyally—as Sir John Lawrence was, and always acknowledged that he had been, by the great bulk of the Civil Service—it is likely that he will be regarded with envy or with jealousy by some few of the older and more important members of the service, whom he had so hopelessly distanced. They are able to thwart him in ways which it is easy to understand, but which it is not so easy for him to take notice of, to check, or to repress. He brings to his great task a mind which has, necessarily, been made up on many of the more important questions which will come before him. He is imbued in some measure, or, what comes to the same thing, he is regarded by others as imbued, with the ideas, the partialities, the specialties of the particular province or particular office in which he has gained his experience and won his reputation. And this feeling would be greatly intensified in the case of a civilian from the Punjab, and, above all, in the case of such a civilian as Sir John Lawrence. For the Punjab, with all its irregularities of procedure, had, somehow, come to be regarded as 'the model province,' and Sir John Lawrence was the man who with his strong will, his blunt straightforwardness, his carelessness of popularity, his determination to work at the highest pressure himself and to get a similar amount of work out of others, had done more than any other man, or set of men, to gain for it its enviable and envied reputation. Those feelings, of jealousy and dislike would inevitably come to the front at no distant period. But, for the present, they were shamed into silence by the sense of the overwhelming advantages which his knowledge of the people,

of the country, and of the whole situation gave him. He knew his work before he came to it. He was not therefore obliged, like most Governors-General who have not enjoyed similar advantages, to go to school during the first year or the first half of his term of office. His foot was no sooner in the stirrup than he found himself firmly seated in the saddle. He was not at the mercy either of his own, or his predecessor's, secretaries or advisers. Not a day was lost in setting to work, and, within two months of his arrival, it may be truly said that there was hardly a petty detail of the vast machinery of his Government which he had not personally examined. The quantity of arrears, partly owing to the Umbeylah war, partly to the general character of Lord Elgin's rule, his sudden death, and the prolonged interregnum, was very great, but they were all cleared up under his hand and eye, as if by magic.

It had been arranged that the Viceroy should pass on at once to Lahore, where his mere presence would do much to quiet the frontier. But as the Umbeylah war was over, he was free to stay at Calcutta and to clear up arrears. The simple fact that Sir John Lawrence was in India was enough to remind the turbulent that their time was not yet. The ferment of disaffection which, undoubtedly, was then at work beneath the surface of Mohammedan society in various parts of India, never rose to the surface, but sank deeper down or disappeared, and the Wahhabi missionaries of Patna and other cities reserved their spirit stirring harangues or their farsighted intrigues for a more promising opportunity.

Sir John Lawrence was no longer what he had been in physical strength. But the energy of the man, his determination to do for himself what others would have done only by deputy, or perhaps not have done at all; to see with his own eyes, to hear with his own ears, whatever was to be heard or seen, showed itself in forms which amused or startled the officials of Calcutta and of Government House. Did a fire break out by night in the native quarter of the city—one of those fires which, at that time, recurred with such lamentable frequency, and which, if they were not left alone by the authorities to burn themselves out, were seldom extinguished by their exertions till, perhaps, a hundred or more native huts had been reduced to ashes

and the inmates had lost their little all—Sir John Lawrence would make his way on foot to the spot while the fire was still burning, that he might judge for himself as to the extent of the disaster and the means by which similar disasters might be best guarded against for the future. In Calcutta few Europeans allow themselves to walk on foot. But in the fortnight which passed before the purchase of Lord Elgin's stud, the new Viceroy astonished the inhabitants by showing himself on foot at times and places where he would be least expected. 'He walked,' says his Private Secretary, 'to the Eden gardens in the gloom of those January evenings, and, like the Sultan in the Arabian Nights, heard with amusement or with interest remarks about himself as he mingled with the crowd. He walked to the Scotch Church or St. John's on the Sunday morning, throwing down his great white umbrella in the porch, and striding in, to the dismay of the officials, who were expecting him to arrive in full Viceregal state at the grand entrance. He walked across the Maidan at five o'clock in the morning, and, on one occasion, when confronted with a bison or buffalo which had escaped from the Agricultural Exhibition then being held at Calcutta, he amused his Staff by telling them 'not to run,' although his own pace was being rapidly accelerated, and escape from the huge animal, as he bore down upon them, seemed somewhat problematical. He walked to the Bazaar when notice of a fire reached him, and he spent much time during this, his first fortnight in the City of Palaces, in examining the different sites suggested for a Sailors' Home, the first public work he took up, and one to which he devoted himself very assiduously, laying the foundation-stone with his own hand, and heading the subscription list with a large donation. It was on his return from one of these pedestrian excursions, late in the evening, that he met with a personal repulse which was duly published in the newspapers on the following morning, and afforded much amusement to the Calcutta community. The south entrance to the Viceregal Palace is considered sacred to the Governor-General, and ingress after dark is only allowed to those to whom he gives special permission. Just as Sir John had passed through this portal he was challenged by the sentry with a smart '*Hoo cum dar?*'



(‘Who comes there?’) Not stopping to reply, Sir John pushed on, when his further progress was effectually barred by the Sepoy, who brought his weapon with fixed bayonet down to the charge. The members of the Staff, who were convulsed with laughter, in vain assured the sentry that it was the Governor-General. He had never heard of, much less seen, the ‘great Padishah,’ or ‘Lord Sahib Bahadur,’ walking on his own feet; and when told that this was ‘Jan Larens’ of the Punjab, he collapsed with fear, and was only too glad to see him pass on, unruffled, into the house.

Of the enjoyments of domestic life during this first year of his high office, Sir John Lawrence had little or nothing. He was without wife or child, and there was no one, therefore, with whom he could halve the petty annoyances and the multitudinous cares of his position, by the mere fact that he was able to tell them to a sympathising ear and heart. In his private life, he retained, as far as possible, all his simple habits. His work was done, as in the old Punjab days—and it must have been almost the only thing in the populous solitudes of Government House which could remind him of old days—in the loosest of loose dresses, his coat and waistcoat and collar thrown off, his shirt sleeves tucked up, his slippers on his feet. On one occasion, soon after his arrival, though he was, in other respects, duly attired, he omitted, in a moment of over-work or over-worry, to change his slippers before receiving a Deputation of Calcutta dignitaries. It was an omission which might even have pleased those who had eyes to see, through his neglect, the true character of the man. But there were some who never forgot or forgave it. When he heard that he had given offence, he turned, in astonishment, to his Private Secretary, and said, with a simplicity which, if it ever reached the ears of the Deputation, might well have disarmed any lingering resentment on their part, ‘Why, Hathaway, they were quite new and good slippers!’

But it is time to enter on the more public part of Sir John Lawrence’s career as Viceroy, and it may be well to give first a brief account of the machinery of the Indian Government, and of the more important personage by whom, on his arrival, he found himself surrounded. His position

as Viceroy with the members of his newly constructed Council around him was, as has been pointed out by W. S. Seton-Karr, very different from that which he had filled as 'paternal despot' of the Punjab. Nor was his power to be compared with that which had been wielded by the more vigorous and self-reliant of his predecessors. Lord Wellesley, Lord Ellenborough and others had often been able, owing to the distance of England from India, and the peculiarities of 'the double government,' to take the bit in their teeth, to strike out a line of their own, to begin a war, to annex a province, to depose the descendants of a long line of kings, in defiance of the wishes of their masters at home, and with the happy consciousness that a deed of the kind, once done, could not be undone.

But now all this was changed. The electric telegraph had brought Calcutta to within a few days' distance from Westminster, and the wise and energetic, if somewhat despotic, policy of the Secretary of State—the Maharaja Wood, as he was called in India—who was responsible only to Parliament, had shorn the Viceroy of much of his independence of action, and seemed likely to make him, unless he was a man of exceptionally strong will, too much of a mere mouthpiece of the Government at home. On the other hand, the remodelling of the Supreme Council had given the Governor-General 'a semblance of a Cabinet of his own.' I say the *semblance*; for, strange as it may seem to those who judge by the analogy of the Cabinet at home, the Governor-General was unable—indeed he had always been unable—either to appoint or dismiss a single member of his Council without leave being first given from England. Each member of Council was, of course, entitled to have a hearing before any important measure was decided on, and the collective weight of the whole was such that it was difficult for the Viceroy, except on rare occasions, to overrule its opposition. Thus, while the dignity of the Governor-General was as great, or greater than it had ever been, his power, as Sir John Lawrence soon found, and often bitterly complains, was by no means commensurate with it.

The Executive Council consisted of seven members. The Viceroy was President. The Commander-in-Chief had a seat in virtue of his office, and the remaining five places

were filled by men who were at the head of the five great departments of State, Home, Legislative, Military, Finance, and Public Works. Each member was responsible for the routine business of his own Department, but on all important questions he took the pleasure of the Viceroy, and, once a week, the whole body met to discuss the affairs of the Empire in common. There was also a second or 'Legislative' Council, composed of the members of the Executive, with the addition of certain unofficial members who were supposed to have a special knowledge of different parts of India, and to be able to represent them in debate. Of this Council, also, the Viceroy was President, and, so long as the session lasted, it, too, met once a week.

Besides the general control over all the Departments of the State which his office necessarily implies, the Viceroy is usually—and Sir John Lawrence was throughout his term of rule—his own Minister of Foreign Affairs. In other words, he was directly responsible for our relations, first, with all foreign states which were supposed, by courtesy, to lie within the sweep of his searching glance, such as Cabul and Ava, Muscat and Zanzibar; and, secondly, with all the half-independent princes—about a hundred and fifty in number—who are to be found between the Himalayas and Cape Comorin, and rule, it has been calculated, over some 600,000 square miles of territory and some 50,000,000 subjects. Within the limits of this ample roll of feudatory princes are to be found, on the one hand, great potentates who, like the Nizam, or Scindia, or Holkar, rule what in Europe would be considered spacious monarchies and have, in times not very remote, been names of terror to all their neighbours; and, on the other hand, Rajpoot chiefs, many of them men of the bluest blood in India, and boasting of a line of ancestry whose length not a few European monarchs might envy.

The new Viceroy was fortunate in many of the men whom he found at starting on his Council, and in many of the Governors or Lieutenant-Governors who were responsible for various portions of his vast charge. The Financial Member of Council was his oldest Indian friend, Sir Charles Trevelyan, who, after being recalled a few years before by Sir Charles Wood for an act of conscientious insubordination

from his post as Governor of Madras, had had the satisfaction of finding that India could not long get on without him; and, on the invitation of the same Sir Charles Wood, had now returned to a hardly less important post, the Chancellorship of the Exchequer, as it might be called, of the whole Indian Empire. He was busy as ever in ferreting out abuses. His brain teemed with schemes of reform—economical, educational, and philanthropic. No grass was ever likely to grow under his feet.

The Military Member of Council had been the dearest friend of Henry Lawrence, and, in spite of much official friction in bygone times when he was Chief-Engineer in the Punjab, was by no means unfriendly to Sir John. 'I have had many rubs with Robert Napier,' says his Chief in one of his letters written about this time, 'but he is a noble fellow.'

The Legal Member was Sir Henry Maine, who, before he came out to India, had set a permanent mark on thought and literature by the publication of his book on 'Ancient Law,' and has certainly left his stamp on the Statute Book of India by the many wise laws which, in conjunction with his Chief, he was instrumental in maturing and carrying through both Councils.

The 'ordinary' Members were W. Grey and H. B. Harington, who was soon succeeded by Noble Taylor. The Commander-in-Chief was Sir Hugh Rose, a man of great energy, to the brilliancy of whose campaign in Central India, towards the close of the Mutiny, History has perhaps, as yet, done too little justice. He was a true friend of the soldier, ever ready to suggest plans for his good. But his best friends would admit that his presence in Council was not calculated to facilitate the despatch of public business. He was uncompromising and impracticable; always ready to re-open a question when it had been discussed and decided; and his return to England at the end of the following year, while it was universally admitted to be a great loss to the army, was felt to be a relief by all those Members of Council who knew that there was much to be done, and not too much time in which to do it.

As regards the Presidencies and the chief Provincial Governments, Bengal was subject to Sir Cecil Beadon;

Madras, to Sir William Denison ; Bombay, to Sir Bartle Frere. Drummond was Lieutenant-Governor of the North-West ; Oude, destined throughout Sir John Lawrence's reign to be the chief battle-field of tenant-right, formed the Chief-Commissionership of Sir Charles Wingfield, the most thoroughgoing champion of the Talukdars. Phayre was Chief Commissioner of British Burmah ; Meade was Resident at the Court of Scindia. The Central Provinces formed an almost virgin soil for the energies, physical and intellectual, of Sir Richard Temple ; while Sir Robert Montgomery and Sir Donald Macleod, two of Sir John's right-hand men in bygone years, were to rule in succession and with success the great province with which his name will ever be connected.

The Chief Secretaries of the various Departments were hardly less notable. Sir Henry Durand, Sir William Muir, Sir Richard Temple, Mr. Seton-Karr, were successively Foreign Secretaries. Sir Edward Clive Bayley was Secretary of the Home Department ; E. H. Lushington of Finance ; Whitley Stokes of the Legislative ; General Richard Strachey, and afterwards Colonel Dickens, of Public Works ; while Sir Henry Norman, whose name has occurred so often in these pages, acted as Chief Military Secretary throughout the whole period of Sir John's Viceroyalty. The names of Sir William Mansfield as Commander-in-Chief, of Sir John Strachey, of Sir George Yule, of Sir George Campbell and of others, come to the front more prominently in the latter part of his reign. Such were some of the chief personages who play their part during the five years which I have now to sketch. It is well to bring their names together at the outset, for it must always be remembered when, for the sake of brevity, I say that Sir John Lawrence did this or that, that these men, some or all of them, as they shared in his labours, so are they entitled to have—and he above all would have wished them to have—a full share of the credit.

The three months which Sir John Lawrence spent in Calcutta before moving up the country, not only saw all arrears cleared off, but were fruitful of promise for the future. The various Departments woke up, at his touch, to fresh zeal and life. A Sanitary Commission was ap-

pointed, under the Presidency of John Strachey, to inquire into the condition of towns and cantonments throughout the country, and to make suggestions for their improvement. It was a reform which had long been needed, and was now begun in good earnest. The Hindus were forbidden to throw their dead bodies into the Hooghly, an order which was forthwith represented by the Viceroy's enemies in the press and by 'the good folks at home,' as he calls them, as an insidious attempt by the Puritan Governor-General to interfere with the Hindu religion! The steps taken to lessen the ravages of disease among the soldiers were warmly sanctioned. The foundation stone of a Sailors' Home was laid, after careful inquiry, by the Viceroy himself, in an appropriate spot—an attempt to save one of the most helpless parts of the Calcutta community from their worst enemies and from themselves. The Sitana war was wound up and precautions taken against any possible renewal of it in the following years by the more aggressive spirits in our services. Raja Sahib Dyal, one of the best men for the purpose in all India, was summoned from the Punjab to take a seat in the Legislative Council. Sir Richard Temple was appointed to the Central Provinces in place of a valetudinarian, who was not adapted to develop its vast capacities. Early in April, Sir Charles Trevelyan produced his budget, and in spite of the reduction of duties and the increased pay given to the army, he was able to show that there was a surplus.

These and other matters settled, Sir John Lawrence started, on April 15, for Simla, with clear files and a clear conscience. It was a step on which the doctors had insisted as a necessary condition of his taking the Viceroyalty, and it had been warmly approved by Sir Charles Wood, who repeatedly urged him by letter to go thither, even before he had finished off his work at Calcutta. He took his Council with him; a step which, in spite of the expense attending the move, and its unpopularity with Indian statesmen of the old school, Sir John Lawrence always maintained was economical, if not of money, at least of what was more important, of men and of work. 'I believe,' he says in one of his letters, 'that we (the Council) will do more work in one day here (Simla) than in five days down in Calcutta.'

In the cool air of Simla, the Viceroy seemed to take a new lease of health and strength, and so impressed was he with the benefits to the public service to be derived from the residence of Government there during the hot season, that he wrote to Sir Charles Wood proposing, not in his own interest—for leave to that effect had been long since given him as a condition of his returning to India—but for the benefit of all concerned, that the Government should habitually spend six out of every twelve months there. The impression had been gaining ground for several years past, that, in many respects, Calcutta was not well fitted to be the capital of India. Situated on the extreme eastern corner of the Empire, in the burning plains of Bengal, amidst a network of sluggish streams, exposed to cyclones, and floods, and pestilences, what wonder that it had come to be looked upon, during six months of the year, as a vast vapour bath in which those Europeans, who had the will to work, must needs do so at half power? It had long been said, that of every thousand soldiers quartered in Bengal, sixty-five were doomed to die within the year.

Another subject on which Sir John Lawrence's letters show that he was much interested at this time was the all-important, but, unfortunately, to the ordinary Englishman, the somewhat forbidden questions of the 'Redemption of the Land Tax,' and the extension of the 'Permanent Settlement.' To the Redemption of the Land Tax he was, for reasons into which I need not enter here, opposed. To the extension of the Permanent Settlement, that is, to the perpetual limitation of the demands of the State on its subjects in the shape of land tax, he gave a qualified and statesmanlike support. No one was more alive than he to the want of enquiry and forethought with which the Permanent Settlement had been originally introduced into Bengal. The men who introduced it had done so on the only lines with which the statesmen of that day were familiar, those of the English land system. Gross injustice had thus been done to the peasants who had true proprietary or occupancy rights in the soil; and there had been the standing grievance ever since of a taxation which pressed unequally on different parts of one and the same empire. In the year 1861, for instance, it was calculated

that, while Bengal, with its 280,000 square miles of fertile land and its population of 41,000,000, paid only 8,000,000*l.* to the State, Madras, with much less than half that number of square miles of poor soil, and little more than half its population, had paid not less than 6,000,000*l.* In other words, an assessment of the land tax which had seemed sufficiently heavy at a time when the land was very imperfectly cultivated, was found to be much too light now that it had been brought into proper cultivation. And the State suffered accordingly. Considerations of this kind had made John Lawrence, in his earlier life, a strong opponent of the Bengal and an equally strong adherent of the North-West system. Under this latter system, the land tax was assessed low, for long periods of twenty or thirty years, but, at the end of that time, the assessment was liable to revision and enhancement, and it was this system, which he had himself introduced, with marked success, into the Punjab. But he was no slave—as is too often the case with officials—to a stolid consistency. He was not afraid to change his mind when he saw reason to do so. He saw that the mistakes which had been made, and the injustice of which we had been guilty in Bengal, were no necessary part of the Permanent Settlement, but were the result of the ignorance or carelessness of those who had introduced it. He knew that revisions of assessment were expensive to the State and vexatious to the people; that if the masses were prosperous and contented, the military force necessary to hold the country would be small; finally, that the benefit to the cultivators, if they could feel certain that they would be allowed to reap the full fruit of the labour which they expended on the improvement of the soil, would be incalculable. On these and other grounds he was anxious that, while the mistakes made in Bengal were carefully avoided elsewhere, and, as far as possible, rectified in Bengal itself, the benefits of a Permanent Settlement should be extended to all those states in the North-West and the Punjab, two-thirds of whose total area had been brought under cultivation.

The interest, which Queen Victoria felt in the greatest dependency of her Empire had been forcibly impressed on Sir John Lawrence in a farewell interview which had taken place just before he started for India as her representative.



and Viceroy. The Queen, so he told the chiefs assembled in the great Durbar at Lahore which will be described in the next chapter, had on that occasion 'warmly enjoined upon him the duty of caring for all her subjects in the East.' And this interest, or rather this maternal solicitude, was brought before him in an equally forcible manner by the letters from Her Majesty which reached him, from time to time, throughout the period of his Viceroyalty. Her first letter has a pathos which is all its own, and will illustrate what I have already said of Prince Albert's knowledge of India, and of the opinion which Sir John Lawrence had formed respecting him.

Osborne : July 26, 1864.

The Queen ought and meant, long ere this, to have acknowledged Sir John Lawrence's letter of January 21, with very satisfactory accounts of the state of her great Indian Empire. She regrets that he has not written again, but hopes to hear soon from him an account of the different places which he has visited and of the state of the people and the country. Sir John will, she trusts, everywhere express the deep interest the Queen takes in the welfare of her Indian subjects, and how doubly she feels this interest, as her beloved great husband took so very deep an interest in India, and was constantly occupied with everything which could lead to the development of the resources of that great Empire, and to the prosperity and kind and just treatment of the natives. The Queen feels this a sacred legacy, and wishes that her dear husband's great name should ever be looked upon with love by her Indian subjects. The Queen concludes with every wish for Sir John Lawrence's good health and prosperity.

With the majority of the members of his Council and with nearly all his Lieutenant-Governors and Chief Commissioners, Sir John Lawrence found that he was able to work admirably. The chief exceptions to the general harmony were the Commander-in-Chief, Sir Hugh Rose, and the Governor of Bombay, Sir Bartle Frere. For each of these remarkable men he had much respect ; while towards Sir Bartle Frere he also cherished a strong feeling of gratitude for the unstinted help which he had given him in the Mutiny. But the idiosyncrasies of the three men were so marked that there could not fail to be much official friction between them, lasting, in the case of Sir Hugh Rose, till March 1865, when he was succeeded by Sir William Mansfield ; in the case of Sir Bartle Frere, till March 1867, when he bade a

final farewell to India, after thirty years of hard work, in which, whatever his failings, he had managed to attach all classes to himself, and had done brilliant and disinterested service to the State alike in the Deccan and in Sattara, in Scinde, at Calcutta, and at Bombay.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

THE GREAT DURBAR AT LAHORE. OCTOBER 1864.

THERE is one short week in the Viceroyalty of Sir John Lawrence which, as it seems to me, stands forth almost alone in its interest and its significance from all that preceded and followed it. The great Durbar at Lahore must have been, in all its attendant circumstances, one of the proudest and happiest moments of his life. The pressing cares of his high office he threw off for the time, and he surrendered himself, for once, without reserve and without remorse, to its pleasures, its splendours, and its rewards. Surrounded by some of his best and earliest friends, men who had worked for him and with him and under him in years gone by, he found himself, once more, in the capital of his old province, the observed of all observers, the centre of a glittering throng of native chiefs and princes, who had flocked thither from the borders of Thibet, from the snows of the Himalayas, from the wastes of the Derajat, from the burning plains of Mooltan, from the blood-stained palaces of Delhi; almost all of them known to him personally, as men whom he had encouraged or rebuked, conquered, conciliated, or controlled; and all of them, without any exception at all, stirred by that strange mixture of sentiments, now of love and now of fear, but always of respect and awe, which seems to come most home to the Asiatic breast, and warned them in tones which were not to be mistaken, that if any one of them still harboured any hostile feelings towards the British rule, the present was not the time to show them.

For many days before the arrival of Sir John Lawrence at the capital of the Punjab, the whole province had been

astir. The famous jewellers of the Chandni Chouk at Delhi had packed off their glittering stores to grace the Viceregal pageant. The roads—not least the Grand Trunk Road itself—had been blocked by the huge trains of the native Princes, who, vying with one another in their magnificence, were lazily hurrying on towards their destination. The solid silver howdahs, and the fantastically decorated doolies; the carriages and flags; the elephants and camels; the horses, mules, and bullocks; the infantry soldiers armed with shields and matchlocks half as long again as themselves, and the troops of cavalry clad in chain armour—altogether formed a scene of ever-varying and picturesque confusion.

On October 13, the last and greatest of the 'independent' or 'protected' Princes, Runbeer Sing, Maharaja of Jummoo and Kashmere, attended by a train of some 5,000 followers, reached the separate camping-ground—for which, as a sovereign Prince, he had stipulated—in the great plain outside the city. His followers were gorgeously caparisoned. But his own dress was of plain white muslin, 'ostentatious in its simplicity,' except in the matter of his turban, which was a 'study of elegant magnificence.' It was of pale blue and white silk, trimmed with gold lace, and ornamented with a single peacock's feather fastened by a sparkling jewel. The Maharaja of Puttiala had arrived shortly before him. And now all was ready for the Viceroy.

The friends of the Governor-General saw at a glance—they never could have thought otherwise—that he was quite unchanged by the change in his condition. 'He wore,' says an eye-witness, 'the same simple dress. There was the same vigorous movement of his limbs and head, and the same determined mode of expression, enforced by considerable action.' On arriving at the railway station at Lahore, the first sod of which he had himself turned as he left India six years before, he found that the whole of the Durbaris, and the whole city to boot, had turned out to greet him. There was the young Maharaja of Puttiala 'blazing with diamonds,' and the young Maharaja of Jheend, both of whom received a warm greeting, in memory of the timely aid rendered to him and to England by their predecessors during the Mutiny. There was the Maharaja of Kuppur-

thalla, who was to receive from his hands, a day or two hence, the Order of the Star of India, in recognition of his distinguished services, as well as his personal worth. While, outside the station, on every coign of vantage and under the shade of every tree, were gathered crowds of natives, all hoping to hear the familiar voice, or, at least, to get a distant sight of the familiar form. Not many of them were altogether disappointed, and not a few of those whom he knew and recognised received a friendly word or even a familiar pat upon the back, with which they went home delighted.

But it was to be a week of work as well as of play and of show. That night, Sir John Lawrence was entertained at a State dinner at Government House. On the following morning, Saturday, the 15th, there was a levée at ten o'clock, and then a private Durbar for the great chieftains, each of whom spent a quarter of an hour in private conversation with the Viceroy. Nor did the interview consist of a mere bandying of Oriental compliments. Sir John Lawrence was no good hand at that. There was an earnest and genial talk about the state of the country and the principality of each Raja, and then a few words of encouragement and advice for the future. In the afternoon, an entertainment was given by Sir Robert Montgomery in the famous Shalimar Gardens, the handiwork of that master-builder of the East, Shah Jehan. Few cities indeed were there in the North-West of India which Shah Jehan had not touched with his enchanter's wand; and there was no city which he touched which he did not also permanently adorn.

Sunday, the 16th, was a pleasant breathing space, as Sir John Lawrence and his school in the Punjab had always endeavoured to arrange that it should be, in the midst of work or of festivity. On Monday, the 17th, Sir John Lawrence got through an amount of work which must have satisfied even his insatiable appetite for it. At six o'clock in the morning he began to pay his return visits to the chiefs. After breakfast, he held a discussion of some four hours with the chief officials on some great engineering works which were to be carried out at Mooltan. After luncheon, he conversed with the teachers and the students

of the Government schools, some 800 in number, who had been gathered together for the purpose ; and amongst them he singled out for special notice the young son of Moolraj, the Dewan of Mooltan, but for whose rash act the Punjab would not have fallen till a later period, and, just possibly, might not have fallen at all into British hands. Later on in the afternoon, in the presence of a brilliant assemblage, he invested the Raja of Kuppurthalla with the Star of India. His speech was in Hindustani, so that every word of it could be caught by the assembled chiefs. He dwelt on his personal friendship with the Raja's father, and on the distinguished services which, as none knew better than he, had been rendered during the Mutiny by the Raja himself. In the evening, the 'Lawrence Hall,' a building erected by his friends to commemorate his services in the Punjab, and bearing on its front in large letters the simple words, 'John Lawrence,' was formally opened amidst an enthusiastic assemblage. The chief feature of the whole ceremony was the simple and hearty eulogy pronounced by Montgomery on his Chief, and the equally simple and even more touching tribute rendered by Sir John to his former colleagues, and not least, to the mighty dead. There were tears on many faces, and at one point in his speech, which will easily be recognised, the Governor-General himself almost broke down with emotion.

Sir Robert Montgomery said :—

Gentlemen and Ladies,—I esteem it a high honour to have the privilege of proposing the health of our Viceroy and Governor-General, Sir John Lawrence. I have known him for upwards of five-and-forty years. We were schoolfellows together in Ireland, as were also his distinguished brothers, Henry and George Lawrence. (Cheers.) We separated for many years, and did not meet again until the annexation of the Punjab, when I saw that the strong will of the boy had ripened into the determined man. Clear, vigorous, and energetic, just and impartial, he was feared and respected by all, and his administration became a model for other provinces. (Cheers.) It was in the Jullundur Doab that he first began his Punjab career. He was selected for it by Lord Hardinge, and, subsequently, was called to Lahore, and eventually became Chief Commissioner. And then came 1857. The events of it are fresh in our memory. The Punjab, under his grasp, stood firm. Delhi must be regained or India lost. The Punjab was cut off from all aid. It poured down, at his bidding, from its hills and plains the flower of its native chivalry. The city was captured, and we were saved—

aye, India was saved. (Cheers.) England acknowledged his eminent services, and his name has become a household word through the land. (Loud cheers.) And we who have served with him and under him are proud to see him occupying and adorning the most important post under the Crown. We are here to welcome him this day in a hall erected to his memory by his Punjab friends. We welcome him as our old Chief Commissioner, our old Lieutenant-Governor, our Viceroy. (Cheers.) I call on you, one and all, to join me in drinking the health of Sir John Lawrence. (Loud and prolonged cheers.)

Sir John Lawrence, in returning thanks, said :—

Sir Robert Montgomery, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—I thank you, Sir Robert, for the kind and genial way in which you have proposed my health, and you, ladies and gentlemen, for the handsome and cordial manner in which you have responded to the toast. I don't think I quite deserved all that Sir Robert has said of me. But I must say I like it. (Laughter and cheers.) It's only human nature. (Cheers.) My nature has been called a hard one. But, believe me, it softens at your kindness. Sir Robert has told you that we were schoolfellows forty years ago. I wish he had left out the forty years. But as I am a married man with nine children, it doesn't much matter. Well, it is quite true that we were at school together forty years ago, at a place very famous in history, Londonderry—(cheers and laughter)—celebrated for defending itself against great odds. Well, perhaps some of the old North-Irish blood flowed in our veins, for we came from that part. And when the time came that in India we found ourselves fighting against still greater odds, the blood of the old defenders of Derry warmed within us, and, like old war horses, we buckled to our work. (Cheers.) But, gentlemen, I think that whatever I may have done, my lieutenant, Sir Robert Montgomery, did almost more. (Cheers.) Gentlemen and ladies,—When I think of those terrible days I hardly know whether to think of them with pride or with sorrow. When I remember the glorious deeds of our army before Delhi, I feel proud of my nation and my countrymen—Irish, English, and Scotch. But when I think of the genius and bravery which are buried at Delhi, I feel that our triumph was indeed dearly bought. There was John Nicholson. I think of him, as one without whom, perhaps, not even Englishmen would ever have taken Delhi. I can hardly say any more—(cheers)—but this I will say, that as long as an Englishman survives in India the name of John Nicholson will never be forgotten. I had, in those days, under me a body of officers in the Punjab who for zeal, energy, and ability, were as good as India ever has, or ever will, produce. If we were, in any way, an example to the rest of India, we have had our reward. Ladies and gentlemen,—Six years ago, I left this country with a shattered constitution, after many years' hard work. But I left it in the hands of Sir Robert Montgomery. My mantle could not have fallen upon better shoulders. And when I look around me and see the smiling, happy faces of a contented people, and the material improvements which have

been made under his guidance, it sometimes seems to me that it would have been well had the mantle fallen upon him sooner. (Cheers.) It has given me the greatest pleasure to return to the Punjab. I have been much pleased with what I have seen, and I wish that I had time to go over the whole of it. It has given me much pleasure to meet you all here to-night. Again I thank you for the kind way in which you have received me, and I wish you all health and happiness. (Loud and prolonged cheers.)

The following day, the 18th, was that for which all that had preceded it was only the preparation. On that day, the Viceroy was to receive, in Grand Durbar, an assemblage of Princes and Chiefs such as could have been gathered together in no other city, and from no other province in the Empire. Bombay can boast of an extraordinary mixture of races in its population of nearly 700,000 souls. But in the vast city of tents which had been pitched outside the walls of Lahore, there were some 80,000 armed men, the retainers of six hundred chieftains, of every variety of stature and of countenance, of garments, of colour, and of language. The Tower of Babel or the Day of Pentecost can hardly have been witnesses of such a confusion of tongues; and Mithridates himself, master though he is said to have been of twenty-five different languages, could hardly have boasted, had he been ruler, 'not of his own Pontus and the adjoining 'mountain of languages,' but of the Punjab and its adjoining mountain ranges, that he was able to transact business, in their own dialects, with every tribe in his dominions. There were huge warriors from Peshawur and its mountain crags, who would have laughed to scorn a summons from Lahore, had it come to them from Runjeet Sing himself. There were wild and unkempt Hill-men from the Suliman Range, who looked as though they would be willing to cut the throats of their dearest friends in revenge for a fancied affront, or to gain some paltry bit of plunder. There was the burly Envoy from Cabul and his numerous following. There were Rajpoots of the oldest stock in existence, from the Kangra Hills. There were little Ghoorkas from the frontier of Thibet. There were wiry Sikhs from Malwa and the Manjha, some of them the very men who had shaken our empire at Ferozeshah and Chillianwallah, and had afterwards done much to save it before Delhi. Finally,



there were ambassadors from Khokand—a city hardly as yet known to fame even among the Sikhs and Afghans far away in the half-fabulous regions beyond the Oxus—who had come, not for the first time, to ask for English aid against the 'great White Czar,' who, even then, seemed to be threatening their existence, and before long was to make good his threats, in his unstaying and pitiless advance across the wilds of Central Asia.

The spot chosen for the Durbar was picturesque and impressive enough. It was a green and spacious plain, half encircled by the Ravi; the very spot on which, a century before, Ahmed Shah Dourani had encamped; and on which, hardly a quarter of a century before, Runjeet Sing himself had repeatedly reviewed, in the mid-career of his conquests, his noble and, till then, invincible army. To the south, lay the city of Lahore, almost every conspicuous building in which recalled the same famous name. There was the Mosque, with its noble domes and minarets, and its memories of the religious hate which separates Sikhs from Muslims. There was Runjeet's fort. There was Runjeet's palace. There was Runjeet's tomb. Thus most of the historical associations of the place clustered around the life of the 'Lion of the Punjab.' All that met the eye, on the other hand, told of the greater power which had swept him and his away, and, for good or evil, had taken his place. His son and heir was now a private English gentleman, living by choice in a Christian country, and professing the Christian religion. His wife, or the last of his wives, had just died in a London suburb, and the Koh-i-noor, the matchless jewel which had graced Persian, and Afghan, and Sikh sceptres, had passed through Sir John Lawrence's hands and pocket, and was glittering, six thousand miles away, in the crown of the English Queen. Was it for evil or for good, this mighty change—and all that had come, and was still to come from it? Here was food enough for thought, if only the dazzling sights which met the eye would leave any space for reflection.

Every Chief was to be in his place in the huge canvas palace by nine o'clock in the morning. But, that there might be no hitch in the arrangements, the Viceroy was, for once in his life, intentionally late. And the delay of half

an hour, while it helped to raise expectation to the tiptoe, also gave time to note the brilliant dresses and to reflect on the strange histories of the six hundred units, who each in his measure went to make up the gorgeous whole. There was the Raja of Jheend for instance, dressed in pure white muslin, glowing with emeralds and diamonds, and wearing a yellow turban. There was the Maharaja of Puttiala, the head of the whole Sikh race, wearing a rich lavender dress, which was almost concealed by emeralds and pearls. There was the Raja of Kuppurthalla, decorated with the newly won insignia of the Star of India. There was the Raja of Faridkote, clad, from head to foot, in the true Khalsa yellow.

At last, the half-hour of suspense was over, and as the carriage and four of the Viceroy drove up to the tent, the troops who lined the road presented arms, the band struck up, the first gun of a royal salute was fired, and then the whole assembly of Chiefs and Princes rose to their feet, as Sir John Lawrence, with all his orders on him, but still the simplest in attire of all present, walked up the tent, mounted the platform covered with cloth of gold, and took his seat upon the throne. On his right, was the Maharaja of Kashmere, and, next to him, the other Princes in order of their precedence. On his left, came Sir Robert Montgomery, Sir Henry Maine, Donald Macleod, and the Commissioners of the various Divisions of the Punjab; while, behind the throne, the Deputy and Assistant Commissioners and other officers of the province were ranged in rows, some three hundred in number. Had Sir John Lawrence flinched or faltered in the day of trial seven years before, had he been for one moment other than himself, how many of that brilliant throng—so thought not a few amongst them—would not have been alive to take a part in that moving spectacle! As the booming of the last gun died away, the Viceroy rose, and, with energy and clearness, addressed the assembled Chiefs in Hindustani, that *lingua franca* which everybody in India understands or ought to understand. His words were simple and earnest. They came straight from his heart, and made their way straight to the hearts of his hearers. And as they gazed upon his commanding form, and listened to his direct and manly speech, they must in-

deed have felt that the combination in him of muscular, and moral, and mental power was pretty well complete.

Maharajas, Rajas, and Chiefs! Listen to my words. I have come among you after an absence of nearly six years, and thank you for the kindly welcome you have given me. It is with pleasure that I meet so many of my old friends, while I mourn the loss of those who have passed away.

Princes and Chiefs! It is with great satisfaction that I find nearly six hundred of you assembled around me in this Durbar. I see before me the faces of many friends. I recognise the sons of my old allies, the Maharajas of Kashmere and Puttiala; the Sikh Chiefs of Malwa and the Manjha; the Rajpoot Chiefs of the Hills; the Mohammedan Mullicks of Peshawur and Kohat; the Sirdars of the Derajat, of Hazara, and of Delhi. All have gathered together to do honour to their old ruler.

My friends! Let me tell you of the great interest which the illustrious Queen of England takes in all matters connected with the welfare, and comfort, and contentment of the people in India. Let me inform you, when I returned to my native country, and had the honour of standing in the presence of Her Majesty, how kindly she asked after the welfare of her subjects of the East. Let me tell you when that great Queen appointed me her Viceroy of India, how warmly she enjoined on me the duty of caring for your interests. Prince Albert, the Consort of Her Majesty, the fame of whose greatness and goodness has spread through the whole world, was well acquainted with all connected with this country, and always evinced an ardent desire to see its people happy and flourishing.

My friends! It is now more than eighteen years since I first saw Lahore. For thirteen years I lived in the Punjab. For many years my brother, Sir Henry Lawrence, and I governed this vast country. You all knew him well, and his memory will ever dwell in your hearts as a ruler who was a real friend of its people. I may truly say that from the day we exercised authority in the land, we spared neither our time, nor our labour, nor our health, in endeavouring to accomplish the work which we had undertaken. We studied to make ourselves acquainted with the usages, the feelings, and the wants of every class and race; and we endeavoured to improve the condition of all. There are few parts of this province which I have not visited, and which I hope that I did not leave, in some degree, the better for my visit. Since British rule was introduced, taxation of all kinds has been lightened, canals and roads have been constructed, and schools of learning have been established. From the highest to the lowest, the people have become contented, and have proved loyal. When the great military revolt of 1857 occurred, they aided their rulers most effectively in putting it down. The chiefs mustered their contingents, which served faithfully, and thousands of Punjabi soldiers flocked to our standards, and shared with the British troops the glories, as well as the hardships, of that great struggle.

Princes and Gentlemen! If it be wise for the rulers of a country to understand the language and appreciate the feelings of its people, it is

as important that the people should have a similar knowledge of their rulers. It is only by such means that the two classes can live happily together. To this end, I urge you to instruct your sons, and even your daughters.

Among the solid advantages which you have gained from English rule, I will now only advert to one more. It has given the country many excellent administrators. Some of the ablest and kindest of my countrymen have been employed in the Punjab. Every man, from the highest to the lowest, can appreciate a good ruler. You have such men as Sir Robert Montgomery, Mr. Donald Macleod, Mr. Roberts, Sir Herbert Edwardes, Colonel Lake, and Colonel John Becher—officers who have devoted themselves to your service.

I will now only add that I pray the Great God, who is the God of all the races and all the people of this world, that He may guard and protect you, and teach you all to love justice and hate oppression, and enable you, each in his several ways, to do all the good in his power. May He give you all that is for your real benefit. So long as I live, I shall never forget the years that I passed in the Punjab and the friends that I have acquired throughout this province.

No Governor-General since the time of Warren Hastings, except Sir John Shore, could have addressed an assembly of native chiefs in their own language, even if he would. It is doubtful if he would have so addressed them even if he could. In any case, it was an act of courtesy and genuine feeling, as much as of high policy, on the part of Sir John Lawrence, which delighted all who heard it and all who heard of it, and was calculated to lessen the gulf which still yawns between the European and the Asiatic, the ruler and the ruled. Usually, in a grand Durbar the Foreign Secretary, who must, almost necessarily, be a good Oriental scholar, takes his stand behind the Governor-General, and translates, as best he can, the words which have fallen from the Lord Sahib. But it is easy to see how much of the grace and of the dignity, of the interest and of the genuineness of the whole spectacle, is necessarily lost in such a process. Nobody who witnessed the Lahore Durbar and saw the effect produced by Sir John Lawrence and his speech, could doubt that the objections, theoretical and practical, to a civilian Viceroy sank into insignificance, when the times were what they were, and when the civilian selected for the almost unprecedented honour was a man with the history and the character, the abilities and the personal presence, of Sir John Lawrence.

At the close of his speech, the Viceroy took his seat, and then the Maharajas, the Rajas, and the Sirdars, with their principal followers, were presented to him, in due order of precedence. Each Chief brought up his golden *nuzzur*, which was touched by the Governor-General and then laid at his feet. Sir John had many a kindly word and many a hearty shake of the hand for his old acquaintances ; and his eyes were seen visibly to brighten as some Chiefs who had done good service in the crisis of 1857 approached the steps of his throne. Then followed the *khilluts* or gifts of honour from the Viceroy to the Chiefs—silver vases, gold clocks, inlaid rifles, silk dresses, strings of pearls and other jewels, which reached, as they lay upon the ground, from the platform right up to the entrance of the tent. It was a splendid sight, alike in what it was and what it meant.

So admirable were the arrangements, that the ceremony, which had been expected to last till three in the afternoon, was over two hours before that time. The Viceroy left the tent, as he had arrived, amidst the booming of guns, the roll of drums, and the presenting of arms. And then the great ceremonial was over.

## CHAPTER XXVII.

THE VICEROYALTY. 1865-1866.

THERE is, in Hindu mythology, the story of a giant who was of so huge a stature that when his foot was cut off, it took a long time for the news to reach his ear. India itself is, or rather, perhaps, was, like that giant. It is a country of violent contrasts. While everything seems to smile in one portion of its vast circumference, another is being devastated by a terrible cyclone, by a flood, or by a famine. While the banks of the Ravi were glittering with all the chivalry of Northern India assembled in Durbar to do honour to Sir John Lawrence, the banks of the Hooghly were being strewn, for miles, with dismantled or waterlogged vessels ; with houses which had been bodily overturned ; with corrugated iron roofs which had been doubled up like sheets of paper ; with huge trees which had been torn up by the roots and whirled away like wisps of straw. Nor was the wind the only or the worst enemy of the miserable inhabitants of the low-lying land between Calcutta and the sea. A huge wall of water, twelve feet in height, stretching from bank to bank and overlapping them both for several miles, had come rushing up the river from the sea, and had swept away every obstacle, crops and trees, wharves and houses, whole villages and populations, in its course.

Everything that could be done to alleviate the distress was done by order of Sir John Lawrence. But little was that everything ; and his letters as he approached Calcutta, or went down afterwards to Barrackpore, give interesting details of the havoc which met his eyes, though he did not know, and no one could know till much later, the full extent of the calamity. 'About forty ships,' he says, 'some of

them very fine ones, have been sunk or thrown on shore and destroyed. The loss of life among the English sailors is small. But a great number are thrown adrift. The destruction of life among the natives is considerable. Out of a population of 3,000 on Saugor Island at the mouth of the river, not more than ten per cent. survive. From Burdwan downwards to Calcutta, we came on uprooted trees and broken-down telegraph posts.'

On December 7, soon, that is, after he had taken up his winter quarters in Calcutta, he was gladdened by the arrival of his wife. It was just a year since he had left her at Southgate. In the intermediate March, a daughter, Maude, had been born; and, now, after much doubt and discussion as to the conflicting claims of her husband in India and her children in England, those of the husband had won the day. Accordingly, leaving her other children to the care of her sister, Letitia Hayes, at Southgate, Lady Lawrence set out for India with her two eldest and her youngest daughters. 'You cannot think,' says Sir John, in a letter to a friend in England shortly afterwards, 'what a difference the arrival of my wife has made to me!' But those who know the man will not need to be told how the gaieties of Government House, henceforward, seemed less dreary, and how the troubles inseparable from his office were often lessened or removed by a quiet talk in the intervals of his work.

The letters of Sir John Lawrence written during the cool season at Calcutta deal with many questions of practical importance in which he was keenly interested. Such were the abolition of the 'half-batta' system, the extension of irrigation works by Government, the construction of improved barracks and of fortified positions throughout India, the abolition of grand juries, the reorganisation of the native, and the reduction of the numbers of the English army. But the greatest and increasing cause of anxiety, and that which affected and interpenetrated all his views on these subjects, was the state of the finances. In the winter of 1864-1865 there were sad anticipations of a general drought. The great military works under contemplation were to cost the enormous sum of ten million pounds sterling! There was a demand for a general rise of salaries, and every item of expenditure in every branch of the service was steadily

increasing. Under such circumstances, the first duty of a statesman was financial. But in this task he found himself 'cabined, cribbed, confined' on every side. He stood almost alone. Everybody, he often complains, was for economy in the abstract, but was entirely opposed to each particular and each practicable measure of economical reform.

Throughout his Viceroyalty, Sir John Lawrence found that to advocate economy was to set nearly every interest in the country, except those of the millions, against him. And in India, more even than in other countries, it is the few and not the many, the rich and not the poor, who can most easily make their wants known and their voices heard. He says, on February 4 :—

Our financial prospects are very gloomy indeed. The *furor* for expenditure is excessive. A considerable sum must be laid out in building new barracks and improving the old ones. But the tendency is to overdo the matter. I would limit this, if I could hope for any support, but this I do not see. Sir Hugh Rose and Napier have no regard for financial considerations, and Frere is worse than anybody. It was only the other day that he wanted to pay four lacs of rupees for twenty acres of land on which to construct a lunatic asylum near Bombay! He has also allowed buildings to be self-erected at Kurrachi for the Telegraphic Department, which will cost two and three quarter lacs of rupees by the time they are finished! I really believe that it is not practicable to add much to our income in India. You know that I have often said this, long before there was ever any expectation of my coming out. It is most difficult to raise revenue by indirect taxation, and direct taxation necessitates inquiry, which, again, engenders oppression and discontent.

Under these circumstances, the Council had come round reluctantly to the conclusion that the income tax must be retained for another year, and Sir Charles Trevelyan, who had, at one time, sacrificed all his prospects in India to his objections to that impost, seemed to be of the same opinion. But on the day before the promulgation of the Budget, it was found at a meeting of the Council that he had returned to his old hate, and that all the members of the Council present, except the Governor-General himself, had harked back with him.

The Governor-General might, of course, have overruled them. But knowing that Trevelyan would be tempted to look back upon his whole financial administration as a failure,



if he did not have, as he expressed it, at least the grim satisfaction of 'laying the income tax upon the shelf, a potent but imperfect fiscal machine complete in all its gear, ready to be re-imposed in any new emergency,' he declined to take so strong a step, and accepted the alternative proposal of a loan for public works and an increase in the export duties.

The Budget was ultimately disallowed by Sir Charles Wood, and it is abundantly clear that the Governor-General was, personally, inclined to agree with him. But meanwhile he went off to Simla, and a great shifting of the chief actors on the Indian stage took place. Several of his oldest friends and lieutenants took their leave of the country. Sir Robert Montgomery retired upon his laurels, after his successful administration of the Punjab, happily with many years of life and work left in him. Sir Charles Trevelyan did the same, to the great grief of his chief, with whom he had been in almost perfect sympathy throughout. Sir Herbert Edwardes, who had been named by Sir John Lawrence as the next best candidate, after Donald Macleod, for the Lieutenant-Governorship of the Punjab, also went home invalided. Few men have carved out for themselves so early in life, so brilliant a career in India as he. 'He is a born ruler of men,' said the chief, when grieving over its premature termination. But though Sir Herbert Edwardes had done with India, he had not yet done with the Lawrences. For he was to dedicate a considerable portion of the few years which remained to him to the preparation of the biography of his prime friend and patron, Sir Henry Lawrence; while another portion he was to give ungrudgingly to the care of the children of Sir John Lawrence. It was a true knightly service rendered to the man who came next in his affection and only next after Sir Henry. Had he not been willing to step into the gap made by the death of Mrs. Hayes in 1865, Lady Lawrence must have gone home at once, and Sir John Lawrence would have been deprived, during the remainder of his Viceroyalty, of the help and comfort which none but his wife could give him.

The changes in Council were equally great. Maine had gone home temporarily; Harington permanently, and was

succeeded by Noble Taylor. Rose was succeeded by Mansfield, Napier by Durand, Trevelyan by Massey. The Governor-General and Grey were thus the only two members remaining of the Council of the previous year. Happily, however, for Sir John Lawrence's peace of mind there were some few of his older friends who were still left in India and had succeeded to some of the most responsible positions there. The Punjab had passed into the hands of Macleod, the Central Provinces into those of Temple; while Napier had, on the strength of his old chief's urgent representations, been given the command of the Bombay army. The Horse Guards had raised the time-honoured objection that so high a command ought not to be conferred upon an Engineer officer—on any member, that is, of the most scientific branch of the service, and one whose pre-eminent qualifications had been tested in China, as well as in the Punjab and in Central India! But Sir John Lawrence's pertinacity was successful, and Sir Robert Napier received the post from which, by a natural sequence of events, he was ultimately to become, amidst universal acclamations, Lord Napier of Magdala, Commander-in-Chief of the Indian army, Governor of Gibraltar, and, last of all, a Field-Marshal.

It was late in the autumn of 1865, after his return to Calcutta, that the death of his favourite sister, Mrs. Hayes, took place. It was the greatest blow which had ever fallen, which ever was to fall, upon him. She had been his adviser and friend through life. And the confidence, the admiration, and the love which he had felt for her, she, in her turn, had always felt for him. 'If I had known,' he exclaimed in the first bitterness of his spirit, 'that I should not see her again, I would never have come to India as Viceroy.' 'When I think,' he said, some months afterwards, in writing to his sister Charlotte, 'of darling auntie's death, I cannot contain myself.' She left him by her will the little property of Grateley, in Salisbury Plain, a property which had come to her from her husband, and was soon to become known to fame, as uniting,—the small with the great,—to make up the title of the first 'Lord Lawrence of the Punjab and Grateley.' She was buried at Lynton, in Devonshire, where she happened to be staying at the time of her death, and a painted window, erected to her memory by Sir John Law-

rence in Southgate Church, bears an inscription written by him. 'She was a noble and loving woman, who from youth to the last day of her life exercised a wonderful influence on all with whom she was connected. This tablet is erected to her memory by her brother, Sir John Lawrence, to whom she is endeared by the recollections of a lifetime.'

The death of Mrs. Hayes seemed to make the immediate return of Lady Lawrence to England a matter of necessity. But the prompt kindness, first of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Bradley, who received all the Lawrence children into their house for the ensuing Christmas holidays, and then of Sir Herbert and Lady Edwardes, who undertook to occupy Southgate House for a year and take charge of them there, enabled Lady Lawrence to choose once more with a clear conscience between the claims of her husband and her children, and remain at her post in India.

In February, an important change took place in the official relations of the Governor-General. For Sir Charles Wood retired in ill-health from the India Office, and was called to the upper House with the title of Lord Halifax. Sir Charles Wood had never been popular in certain circles, especially in those which were most affected by his reforms. But India has never had a better Secretary of State. His measures were highly appreciated by the Civil Service, and the natives of India honoured him for the courageous stand which he had made against European influence during the indigo disturbances. A man of great ability, he had never shirked work, and had carried through many measures of the first importance, and with a single eye to the public good. He had always taken pains to select the best man for every appointment great and small, and he deserved no small credit for breaking through all considerations of precedent, and choosing for the post of Governor-General the man whom, under the circumstances, he thought to be the best possible man to fill it. The differences of opinion between him and Sir John Lawrence in their new relation had been very slight, considering that each had decided views, that each was of a somewhat autocratic temperament, and that each had a great knowledge of India, gathered, in the one case, from long official duties in the India Office, in the other, from a vast personal ex-

perience on Indian soil. Sir Charles Wood, in announcing his resignation to Sir John Lawrence on February 19, 1866, said :—

It is, as you may well believe, a great pang separating myself from all my old friends and colleagues in the Cabinet and in the Council, and giving up all my official occupation and ceasing to have part in the administration of India, in which I take so deep an interest. But I could not safely run the risk, and I believe that I have acted wisely. It is done, and Lord de Grey succeeds me. He is, as you know, conversant with our business. A great friend of mine, Mr. Stansfeld, becomes Under-Secretary, so that I could not leave the office in hands more satisfactory or agreeable to myself. So much for home matters. Nor can I say that my regret is diminished as to India. I am sorry, very sorry, not to continue to share with you the responsibility and care of the Government of India. We differed very little in anything, and it was a great satisfaction dealing with so honest and straightforward a person as you are. However, I could not help myself; and I can only assure you of my undiminished interest both in your Government and in Indian affairs. I am going to the House of Lords, and if I can ever render you or your Government any service, you may be quite sure that I shall do so with very great pleasure.

A special interest attaches to the first letter written to Sir John Lawrence by Lord de Grey, in view of the position to which he latterly attained, and so worthily filled, as Governor-General of India. I quote therefore a few words from it.

When Sir Charles determined to resign, Lord Russell requested me to become his successor, and although I was very conscious of the great responsibilities which attach to the office, and of the difficulty of following such a Secretary of State as Sir Charles Wood had been, I still felt it was my duty to acquiesce in the arrangement which the Head of the Government considered to be the best that he could make. I therefore now write to you as Secretary of State for India, and I have, in the first place, to request you to communicate with me on all questions as fully and freely as you have hitherto done with Sir Charles. I shall stand in greater need than he did of your advice; and you will always find it my anxious wish to give you every support in my power in the arduous duties of the great post which you so worthily fill. I hope that you saw enough of me, when we were together at the India Office, to know that I feel a deep interest in Indian questions, and in the welfare of the populations for whose good government and prosperity we are responsible. And I can assure you that it is an immense satisfaction to me to know that the principles on which I should desire to see the administration of India conducted, are those by which you, as Governor-General, are constantly guided.

Lord de Grey's administration was too short to allow of his doing much more than collect information and mature his views on the most pressing questions of the day. He was in complete sympathy with Sir John Lawrence's foreign policy as it was explained to him in one of the Governor-General's letters; while, on the question of the annual migration to Simla, which Sir John put before him, frankly expressing his willingness to retire, if, on public grounds, the practice was thought undesirable, he was of the same opinion as Sir Charles Wood before and as Lord Cranborne and Sir Stafford Northcote after him, that it was for the interest of all concerned that the migration should continue. 'I should look,' he says, 'on your departure from India as a great misfortune to the public service, and a still greater one to myself who, new to my present office, stand so much in need of the assistance of your experience and judgment.'

Lord Cranborne succeeded Lord de Grey in July. India was then almost a *terra incognita* to him, nor was he personally acquainted with any of its chief rulers. But, in his first letter, he begged Sir John Lawrence to communicate with him as frankly and unreservedly as if they were old acquaintances. This, it is needless to say, Lawrence did; and the correspondence which passed between them is as interesting and vigorous and racy as any in my possession. On the question of Foreign Policy, as I shall show hereafter, there was a complete agreement, and Sir John Lawrence had also the satisfaction of finding that two matters of vital importance on which he had been writing and pressing for a decision, ever since his accession to office, were soon disposed of by the energy and determination of the new Secretary of State. These two questions were, first, the grievances of the officers of the old 'local' European army, which, after seething and simmering for some six years, had now grown almost into the proportions of a public danger; and, secondly, the extension of works of irrigation throughout India.

It is unnecessary to speak here, in detail, of the grievances of the officers or of the nature of the remedies which were applied to them. It is sufficient to say that the injustice and confusion which had, perhaps necessarily, resulted from the amalgamation of the two armies and had formed the

subject of two Royal Commissions, were, to a great extent, remedied by a bold and liberal measure, which was matured within a month of Lord Cranborne's succession to power, and reconciled all but the few 'irreconcilables.'

The question of the extension of irrigation was more vital still. For twenty years past, as he remarked in his Minute on the Orissa Famine Report, Sir John Lawrence had been an earnest promoter of irrigation works. Sir Arthur Cotton, who has devoted the energies of a lifetime to the same subject, had, long since, pointed out that water was 'as precious as gold in India, or rather it was more precious; for it was life. But one difficulty after another had started up, and had prevented the authorities in India from bringing a definite scheme with estimates before the Home Government.

Sir Charles Wood was quite alive to the importance of irrigation, but he saw the difficulties in the way, and he required, as, no doubt, in his position, he was right in doing, surveys and estimates before embarking on works of such magnitude.

In Lord Cranborne, Sir John Lawrence soon found that he had a chief who fully sympathised with his views as to the supreme importance of irrigation. In one of his early letters, speaking of the Soane irrigation project, Lord Cranborne uses almost the very words which Sir John Lawrence had so often used to Sir Charles Wood :—

We do not attempt to express an opinion on the engineering questions raised between Colonel Jenkins and Colonel Rundall. But we simply urge on you to undertake the irrigation works in whatever way you think best, *only without further delay*. An imperfect or inferior scheme is better than to spend another five or ten years in a controversy as to which is the best.

*Carte blanche* being thus given him, Sir John Lawrence was able to lay down the principles for which he had so long and so earnestly striven: that irrigation works were to be undertaken by Government on a general and well-considered scheme over every part of India which was liable to drought, and that the money needed for them should, where the surplus revenue did not suffice, be raised by means of loans. Colonel Richard Strachey, who now, much

to Sir John Lawrence's delight, returned to India, was, on his instance, appointed Superintendent of Irrigation, and was directed to visit and report on all the great works hitherto undertaken in Madras and Bengal. A separate branch of the Public Works Department was organised in each of the Presidencies, to take charge of irrigation. Thirty civil engineers were sent out from England to superintend the new works, and when Sir John Lawrence laid down his high office in 1869, he was able to say that in the short time of little more than two years which had elapsed since his plans had been sanctioned, there was not a province in the whole of India in which extensive surveys for canals had not been made, new canals projected or approved of, and, in many cases, begun, old ones remodelled, embankments against disastrous floods strengthened, and the system of canal management generally reformed; in fact, that great progress had been made towards insuring a final victory over two of the worst enemies of the inhabitants of India—drought and famine.

Early in November, Sir John Lawrence left Simla for Agra, where he was to hold his second great Durbar, a Durbar which, though it seems to me to have been much inferior in historical interest to that at Lahore, was thought by some good judges to be, in certain of its aspects, even more imposing. No one understood better than Sir John Lawrence, that in the East, pomp may often be power; and no one accordingly was more ready, when occasion required it, to drop his ordinary self and to exchange the privacy, the simplicity, the unceasing desk-work of his ordinary life, for the gorgeousness, and circumstance, and magnificence of a great Eastern Monarch. The splendour of his Darbars was, undoubtedly, all the more impressive from the force of the contrast which they presented to his daily habits. The Durbar at Agra was intended, in the first instance, for the proud and once powerful chiefs of Rajpootana and Bundelkhund, eighty-four of whom responded to his summons. But Sir John availed himself of the opportunity to hold also an Investiture of the Star of India. He was in weak health, and there were many who feared that the never-ending round, continued for nearly a fortnight, of military reviews, of balls and parties, of public and

private interviews, would be too much for his strength. But he managed to stand the test.

The place was well-chosen. Of all the great cities in the North-West of India, Agra is, in historical interest, inferior to Delhi alone. In its buildings and in its surroundings, it is superior even to Delhi. The Pearl Mosque, the tomb at Sekundra, and the Taj Mehal as far surpass the buildings which are the chief pride of Delhi, as Akbar, the greatest of all Indian monarchs, and one of the greatest monarchs of any time and any age, surpasses the savage conquerors or splendid rulers whose names are more closely connected with the capital of the Moguls.

I must pass very rapidly over the details of the Durbar. At the Investiture Durbar, the Maharajas of Joudpore and Kerrowlie became Knights Grand Cross of the Star of India ; while the lower honours of the Order were conferred on a considerable number of persons, native or English, who had either done us strenuous service during the Mutiny or had been closely connected with Sir John Lawrence in his earlier life, and now valued doubly the distinction, as coming from the man who knew best what they had done to deserve it. Such were Donald Macleod, Sirdar Sahib Dyal, and Sirdar Nihal Singh Chachi, who were made K.C.S.I.'s ; while the Companionship of the Order fell to men whose names have occurred again and again in this biography—to Edward Lake, to Reynell Taylor, to Richard Temple, to Arthur Roberts, and to Crawford Chamberlain. It is difficult to say, under such circumstances, which must have felt the most vivid satisfaction, the Viceroy in conferring, or the recipients in receiving, the honour from his hands.

Among other distinguished Englishmen or Natives who received honours were Sir Cecil Beadon ; Colonel Richard Meade, the able Resident at Scindia's Court ; James Gordon, the Viceroy's Private Secretary ; the Maharaja of Vizianagram, and Sir Dinkar Rao. The Maharaja of Kerrowlie, who had fought for us in the Mutiny, the Maharaja of Bulranpore, who had saved the lives of Sir Charles Wingfield and others in Oude, and the Raja of Morarmow, who had done the same for the fugitives from Cawnpore, received their respective Orders from Sir John Lawrence, with a speech which warmly recorded the services of each.



From Agra, Sir John Lawrence paid a visit of a few days to Scindia, and inspected the famous fort of Gwalior, which as the result of skilful management on the part of himself and Colonel Meade, the Mahratta Prince had been induced to allow us to occupy permanently. A year or two previously, Scindia had felt aggrieved, had threatened a visit of complaint to Calcutta, and had even talked of abdication. Now, all was changed and he was on the best terms with himself and with everybody.

One incident of his visit—and the only *contretemps* of the whole—Lord Lawrence was fond of telling in after times; indeed, he told it to my informant, Colonel Henry Yule, on the Sunday but one preceding his death.

It had been arranged by Sir Richard Meade, that Sir John Lawrence should visit the famous fort of Gwalior—which, as I have mentioned, was now held by our own troops—at a particular hour; and, on Sir John's suggestion, Scindia was informed of the proposed visit and invited to accompany him. No answer came to the invitation; and after waiting for some time beyond the appointed hour, at the foot of the fort, to see if the Mahratta Prince was coming, Sir John went in without him, and proceeded with his inspection. While he was thus engaged, a Sepoy came running up to say that Scindia had arrived at another gate; and the Political Agent, Colonel Hutchinson, was sent down, post-haste, to receive him with all honours. But Scindia was already gone. The officer in charge of the gate was under strict orders to admit no armed men into the fort, and had therefore demurred to the entry of Scindia's mounted escort till leave was given. Scindia took his watch out, saw that he had come late, dashed it to the ground, breaking it into many fragments, and straightway rode off in high wrath. Sir John Lawrence was much distressed at the untoward termination of the visit. But the mistake was soon explained, and the Viceroy and the Mahratta Prince parted and continued excellent friends.

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE VICEROYALTY—*continued.* 1867-1868.

ON his arrival in Calcutta, Sir John Lawrence threw himself heartily into the work of relieving the distress in Orissa. There was indeed fresh need for exertion in that direction; for, in August, a great inundation of the Mahanuddy had taken place, laying waste a tract of country of some fifteen hundred square miles and with a large population, who would have to be supported for months to come. An appeal to the Mansion House for help failed, for once, of support. The distress in England from frost, from strikes, and from commercial panic, seemed to absorb the energies of philanthropists at home. It was all the more necessary, therefore, for Calcutta to exert itself. A public meeting was called, at Sir John Lawrence's instance, on February 12; and—a step unprecedented, I believe, in the annals of British India—the Viceroy himself took the chair. He was enthusiastically received. In his speech, he told his audience that what the drought had spared the wide vortex of water had engulfed, and that one-fifth or more probably one-fourth of the inhabitants of the province had perished from flood and famine and their effects; for, as usual, Pestilence had followed closely on the heels of Starvation. Twenty-seven thousand tons of rice must be imported immediately into the province to support the survivors. This speech helped to call forth that active sympathy of the governing for the governed which, in times of prosperity, is often latent, but which needs only a great calamity to call it forth in all its strength. The Viceroy headed the subscription list by a contribution of 10,000 rupees, or 1,000*l.* His example was followed by others according to their

means, and by these and other measures Orissa was able to tide over the period of distress.

Lord Cranborne was succeeded by Sir Stafford Northcote, who, happily for the interests of Indian business, retained his office for a longer period than his two predecessors together—for nearly two years, that is, instead of for only a few months. The first and the most troublesome matter brought before him was the Budget just promulgated by Massey, the Financial Member of Council. There was a deficit. It had been found impracticable to reduce expenditure, and there must be, therefore, some additional taxation. But the proposal made was unfortunate, in more than one respect; for, though there was nothing unjust in its main feature—a tax on trades and professions which was intended to reach those large classes of persons who, in spite of their considerable wealth, had hitherto managed to shirk their share of the public burdens—it was open to serious objection in its details. Moreover, the mode in which it had been carried was objectionable; for it had been introduced and passed through Council in one and the same day. There was a great outcry in Calcutta. An indignation meeting was held, the cheering at which was so vociferous that it could be heard—so it was said—in Government House, and a petition was drawn up and sent to the Secretary of State, begging him to veto the Budget. The agitation proved nothing in itself, for as successive Governors-General and Secretaries of State have found to their cost, and as Sir John Lawrence often bitterly complains, a large part of the English community in India, while they are willing enough to propose an increase of taxation on the natives and to clamour for increased expenditure in all directions, are not so willing to contribute their share towards it. But, in this case, they had a reasonable ground for complaint, of which agitators would, naturally, make the most. Sir John Lawrence had himself been in favour of an Income rather than a License Tax, and had written to Lord Cranborne to that effect some months before. He had also urged the Finance Minister to promulgate the measure in proper time, but without result. Sir Stafford Northcote, as a practised financier, was still more alive to the inconsistencies of the measure. But he was new to office, and was reluctant to

tie the hands of the Government of India on a matter on which they ought to know more than he.

Outside the limits of India proper, there was much to occupy the attention of the Governor-General during this and the following year. To say nothing, at present, of the anarchy in Afghanistan, which seemed, at last, to be nearing a temporary conclusion, a commercial treaty was, after long negotiations, concluded on favourable terms with the King of Burmah. This was followed up by a commercial expedition to Yun-Nan, a province in the South-West of China, then held by the Panthay Mohammedans, who, after centuries of passive resistance to persecution, had, for the time, established their independence, and were found by the Mission to be disposed to be on friendly terms with us. Friendly communications were also received from Yakub Beg, one of those half-military, half-religious geniuses which Islam, even in its decay, seems always capable of producing ; and who, after throwing off the Chinese yoke, and introducing order into some of the most disorderly countries in the world—Kashgar, Yarkand, and Khoten—seemed disposed to turn to us as his natural protectors from his natural foes, who were threatening him from opposite sides at the same moment—the Chinese and the Russians. An envoy from the Khan of Bokhara, who was also alarmed at the progress of the Russians in his direction, was hospitably received at Calcutta, but decisively informed that we could not aid him. A small expedition to the Nicobar Islands put down piracy in one of its native seats ; and, finally, a war which had long been hanging over us, and ought probably to have been undertaken sooner, if it was to be undertaken at all, broke out with Abyssinia.

For four years past, Theodore, the Abyssinian king, had been holding in durance vile at his capital Captain Cameron, our consul at Massowah, and some Germans, who were agents of an English missionary society. They had acted with very little discretion in the matter, and the knowledge of this had tended to tie the hands of the English Government. At last, an Armenian named Rassam was sent to demand their release. But he too was thrown into prison by the Abyssinian monarch, whose savage pride had been offended by an unfortunate omission on the part of the

Secretary of State to answer a letter which he had addressed to the Queen. War was now decided on. But it was not till the summer of 1867 that it was finally declared. 'Sir John Lawrence was warmly in favour of action, and in one of his earliest letters on the subject to the Secretary of State, he took occasion to press upon him the claims of Sir Robert Napier for the chief command. 'Napier is an officer of forty-four years' standing in the Royal Engineers. He greatly distinguished himself during the Mutiny in 1857. He was the second in command in the China Expedition, and was, by all accounts, the life and soul of that campaign.'

The expedition was to be fitted out from India, and the position of Napier as Commander-in-Chief of the Bombay army marked him out, irrespective of his previous services, as the right man to be entrusted with the command. With Sir John Lawrence's full approval—for he knew that Napier was equal to it—the whole responsibility for all the arrangements, commissariat, military, and political, was thrown upon him. With what admirable foresight every detail of the expedition was planned, and the whole brought, in the space of a single campaign of only a few months' duration, to the most triumphant issue by the capture of Magdala, the suicide of Theodore, and the rescue of his captives from their living death, is too well known to be related here.

To no one did the result give keener pleasure than to Napier's old friend and chief, Sir John Lawrence.

The news from Magdala (he writes to Sir Stafford Northcote) is really glorious. So far as I can judge by the telegrams, everything has turned out most happily. We have achieved all that could be desired, and have averted the dangers of a long campaign. I think that the English Government should give Napier a pension. He has saved nothing, and his health is a good deal broken, I suspect.

The pension was given and a peerage with it to the splendid soldier who had planned and carried out the whole, and there were two, and only two, drawbacks to the unalloyed satisfaction with which the Abyssinian war might otherwise have been viewed. The one was its enormous cost; the other, the fact that India, with its disorganised finances, was called upon to pay a large part of the expense of a war which had been undertaken not for India but for 'Im-

perial' purposes—purposes, in fact, in which India was neither directly nor indirectly interested. Sir Robert Napier had never from his earliest days—as few readers of this biography will need to be reminded—cared to do anything cheaply. Whether it was a bridge or a road, or a canal, or, as in this instance, a campaign, it must be done in the best possible way, regardless of expense, and nothing must be left to chance or to the future. It was a noble failing ; and that war is never, under the best of circumstances, likely to be other than a very costly game, is not altogether to be regretted in the case of a country whose opportunities for plunging into it are so numerous and so tempting.

The other question, whether the cost of the Abyssinian war should, or should not, be borne, in part, by India, was one on which there was a serious difference of opinion between Sir John Lawrence and Sir Stafford Northcote. It is not difficult to see on which side Sir John Lawrence, unable as he was, with all his care, to make both ends meet, was likely to throw the weight of his opinion. And in view of the importance which the question has since assumed in relation to the Afghan war, and may assume again, at any moment, I think it well to quote here one passage from his letters:—

Umballa : Nov. 4, 1867.

I am very sorry to hear of the decision that India is to continue to pay for the ordinary expenses of the troops employed from this country in Abyssinia. It does not appear to me to be a fair arrangement, and I fully anticipate that it will create a good deal of excitement and, perhaps, some indignation ; the more particularly as our finances are now at a very low ebb. Surely this is neither a question of hiring or lending, but simply one of payment by the country which employs the troops. I believe that I am right in saying that all the expenses of the British troops employed in the Mutiny who came from England, were paid out of the revenues of India. I recollect very well that, in 1859 and 1860, India was even charged for the cost of unreasonably large numbers of men who were accumulated in the depôts in England, nominally for the Indian service. Then again, in the last China war, *all* the pay, and all the expenses of the troops sent from India to China, were charged to England. In the war with Persia in 1855-56, the expenses of the campaign were divided between India and England, because it was considered that both countries were interested in the objects of the war. In the present case, India has no interest whatever in the Abyssinian expedition, and it appears therefore to me that she should pay none of its cost.

There were other points of importance, such as the changes required in the administration of Bengal, the advantages of Calcutta as a capital, the financial independence of the local governments, the best method of managing the resuscitated Bombay Bank, on which there were considerable differences of opinion between Sir John Lawrence and Sir Stafford Northcote. But the questions on which they were agreed were more numerous and important still. Such were the subjects of irrigation, of the comparative importance of canals and of railways, of the bearing of Europeans, particularly of non-official Europeans, towards the natives, of the annual move of the Governor-General and his Council to Simla, of the necessity for economy, of the deposition of native rulers in case of gross misgovernment, and the whole question of foreign policy which underlay so many of the others, and on which I shall have much to say in the next chapter.

The season at Simla had been, this year, a very sickly one. Cholera had been raging all around, and no precautions seemed able to avert or limit its ravages. On November 1, Sir John and Lady Lawrence left, for the last time, together, the place in which they had spent so many and such busy months; and after a halt of a few days at Delhi, that they might visit their old haunts there, made their way to Lucknow, where it had been arranged that Sir John should hold the last of his great Durbars. The occasion was one of extreme interest from every point of view. The long-standing dispute with the Talukdars of Oude, which I shall describe in the next chapter, had been brought to a satisfactory conclusion. And all was now peace and goodwill. Sir John Strachey, who, with the help of Meer Sing, one of the chief Talukdars, had by great exertions and still greater tact arranged the terms of the compromise, was then Chief Commissioner of Oude, and the Viceroy was to be his guest. Above all, there was the deep interest, at once family and national, attaching to a state visit paid by the Viceroy to the shattered building which had gone through such agonising vicissitudes in the Mutiny, and in whose immediate precincts there lay the most heroic of its defenders, his own brother, who had 'tried to do,' and had done his duty to the last. The chief external feature of the Durbar

was the magnificent procession of seven hundred elephants which accompanied the Viceroy as he entered the city.

•Of all the scenes which they had witnessed in Sir John Lawrence's eventful life, there is no single scene—so one and another of his most faithful friends who accompanied him have assured me—which has stamped itself in such imperishable colours on their recollections, as that in front of the Residency at Lucknow. There, by the corner of the building, stood Sir John Lawrence, alone, in his simple black coat and sun helmet, his hands crossed in front of him, and his Staff at some little distance off, but not so far as that they could not watch the shadows which came and went over his rugged features, as he stood wrapped in thought. There, was the long line of Talukdars, in all their bravery of gold and purple, mounted on their magnificently caparisoned elephants and humbly saluting the Viceroy as they filed past and looked, with satisfaction or the reverse, on their own handiwork, as evidenced by the dents and chasms made by 'millions of rifle bullets and thousands of cannon balls' in that battered building. There, in front, were the miserable defences hastily thrown up under his brother's eye, which had kept a whole army and a whole city, for so many months, at bay, and which had now been partially levelled to admit of the nearer approach of the procession. Close behind him, was the room in which the 'cruel bursting shell' had done its ghastly work on his noble-hearted brother; and some fifty yards away, on the other side of the Residency, was his simple tomb. When the sights and sounds of the great pageant of submission were over, the veteran Viceroy walked round to the sacred spot, still followed, at a distance, by the members of his Staff, and stood there for many minutes by himself, and, once again, wrapped in thought. That day, he must have felt, was a day of final and of bloodless triumph, a triumph won as much by his brother as by himself. And there was something comforting, stimulating, ennobling, in the thought.

Lady Lawrence had not been well for some months past, and it had been settled, partly on that ground, partly on general family considerations, that she should go home early in 1868. Her children had, during the last year, been



under the care of her great friends, Mr. and Mrs. Kensington, who had moved with their own family into Southgate House, and had done everything that the parents themselves could have done for the happiness and well-being of their charge. Two family incidents, such as in the chequer-work of human life, with its alternations of light and shade, often follow close upon each other, marked the last two months spent by Lady Lawrence in India. First, came the news of the death of her only sister, Mrs. Kennedy, who had long been the centre of a large and loving family circle in Ireland, a family circle connected by more than one marriage, and in more than one generation, with the Lawrences. Soon afterwards, followed the marriage of Kate, her eldest daughter, to Colonel Randall, who, it will be remembered, had been the friend and aide-de-camp of John Nicholson at the Trimmu Ghaut, and at Nujuffghur; and, in accordance with the spirit of Nicholson's last request, had, some years since, been appointed Sir John Lawrence's aide-de-camp, and was now to become his son-in-law. It was the first break of the kind in the Lawrence family. But, in this case, the marriage enabled the daughter to remain behind with her father, and fill, so far as might be, her mother's place in the Viceregal hospitalities.

The marriage took place on January 28, 1868; and on February 25, Lady Lawrence, accompanied by her second and her youngest daughters, left Calcutta for England. During the first part of her voyage, she found a most genial companion in Norman Macleod, whose almost royal progress through India, as a delegate from the Church of Scotland on the subject of Christian missions, had just been brought to a conclusion by a public dinner at Calcutta at which Sir John Lawrence had himself presided. He thankfully accepted the place which the Viceroy offered him in the 'Feroze,' the Viceregal steamer, which had taken so many Governors-General to and from India. And in his biography I find the following extract from a letter to his wife:—

The Governor-General came down to the 'Feroze' in his tug, and talked with me, for about two hours, in the frankest manner, giving me an immense number of most interesting facts about his life and government in the Punjab, the Mutiny, Delhi, etc. I was greatly touched by

his goodness ; and I loved him the more when I saw him weeping as he parted, for one year only, with his wife and daughters.

The changes which took place during the last year of Sir John Lawrence's Viceroyalty amongst the chief officers of government were, many of them, highly favourable to the despatch of business. Massey returned to England, and his place as Finance Minister was taken by Richard Temple, while John Strachey was called from Oude and became a Member of Council. 'I anticipate,' said Sir John Lawrence, 'a great accession of strength in every way from these two men.' W. S. Seton-Karr succeeded Temple as Foreign Secretary, a post which he was to hold with great credit, well into the reign of Sir John's successor. Muir became Lieutenant-Governor of the North-West Provinces, while Norman filled the place of Durand, who went home on furlough. Sir Henry Durand was a man of much ability and high character, but of a highly impracticable temper in public matters, and as Military Member of Council, he had acted as though he were inclined, like the famous Prætorian prefect of Tacitus, '*consilii quamvis egregii quod non ipse afferret inimicus*,' to oppose every measure which did not originate with himself, or, at all events, every measure which was especially near to the heart of the Governor-General. Thus, his departure, as the letters before me show, was an infinite relief to Sir John Lawrence.

Altogether, it was a year of vigorous performance, of rapid progress, which were made possible only by the long and anxious efforts of the years which had preceded it. The irrigation works which Sir John Lawrence had, after repeated applications, obtained leave from home to construct, and for which, during the two past years, surveys had been making and estimates forming, were now begun everywhere in good earnest. Railways were pushed on with great rapidity. The Sanitary Commissioners, Sir John's own creation, were hard at work in each province of the empire. The new barracks and forts were rising fast, and were being paid for, thanks to his prudence, not out of capital, but out of revenue. There had been a deficit in more than one year of his Viceroyalty ; owing, partly, to the imperfect control he possessed over the Finance Ministers who were sent

from England ; partly, to the Orissa famine ; partly, to the Bombay expenditure ; and, partly, to that most uncertain as well as unsatisfactory factor in Indian finance, the Opium Revenue. But such had been the general and unexampled prosperity of the country that, in spite of the Mutiny, in spite of two famines, in spite also of the expense attending the reorganisation of the whole Government, the revenue had increased from twenty-seven millions, which had been the total income of the year 1855, to forty-nine millions in 1866. In other words, it had nearly doubled itself in eleven years ! The Legislative Department shared in the general activity, and the Oude and Punjab Tenancy Bills, of which I shall have to say much in the next chapter, passed into laws. Revised furlough rules, which conferred great benefits on the covenanted service of India, were sent home for approval, and efforts were made to extend vernacular education. A small war, called 'the Black Mountain Campaign,' against some tribes on the extreme North-West frontier, was begun, carried through, and finished, in the space of a couple of months ; as soon, that is, as its object was accomplished, without the expenditure of a drop of unnecessary blood in quest of military decorations or military glory. Altogether, the wheels of government moved more rapidly and more smoothly in this than they had done in any previous year of Sir John Lawrence's Viceroyalty ; and when Lord Mayo arrived early in 1869, he succeeded to an administration which had few special anxieties, had no arrears, and was well adjusted in all its constituent parts.

In December, the Conservative Ministry resigned, and Sir Stafford Northcote was succeeded by the Duke of Argyll. Sir John Lawrence was no party man. His sympathies were always on the side of progress. But he had been treated with equal confidence by each successive Secretary of State, whether Conservative or Liberal, and, in those days, India was, happily, almost outside the range of English party conflicts.

## CHAPTER XXIX.

TENANT RIGHT AND FOREIGN POLICY. 1864-1869.

I HAVE reserved for this, the last chapter which I propose to devote to the Viceroyalty of Sir John Lawrence, the two questions—one of internal, the other of external policy, which were most characteristic of his administration as a whole, and which, it may be safely asserted, were never long absent from his thoughts, from the day on which he assumed his high office to that on which he laid it down. The question of internal policy to which I refer is that which appealed to his deepest sympathies, which called forth the most acrimonious attacks upon him, obtained for him the widest unpopularity, and was settled, at last, on terms which conferred great benefits on all concerned. For want of a better name, it may be called the Tenant Right question. The settlement arrived at secured indeed the rights of other classes besides the tenants, but this name will be more suggestive than any other to English readers, who, if they know nothing of the perplexed subject of the tenure of land in India, must, perforce, know something of the difficulties connected with it in a country much nearer home.

The question came to the front, first, in Bengal, and was, in some of its essentials, soonest settled there. There had been in the Bengal Presidency disputes of long standing between the Ryots and the Zemindars—between the cultivators, that is, who grew indigo, and the planters, generally Europeans, who compelled the cultivators to grow it, and then themselves manufactured and sold it. There had been, as might be expected, much indolence, evasion, and cunning on the part of the weak: much greed, ill-usage,

and oppression on the part of the strong. At last, in 1859, a measure known as the 'Rent Law' was passed, which secured or seemed to secure to the peasants those rights which Lord Cornwallis had dangled before their eyes and had then practically, though quite unintentionally, taken away from them at the time of the Permanent Settlement, more than half a century before—security, that is, from arbitrary eviction, as well as from an arbitrary raising of their rent. The Indigo Commission, too, which was appointed in 1860 under the presidency of W. S. Seton-Karr, carried on the good work, and succeeded in settling many of the differences between the planters and the Ryots.

But quarrels were still rife. The peasants refused to cultivate a plant which did not remunerate them, and the planters retaliated, sometimes, by rigidly exacting the existing rent, and in default of payment ejecting the cultivators from their holdings, to their utter ruin; sometimes, by demanding an extravagant rise of rent. A test case of this kind was brought before Sir Barnes Peacock, the Chief Justice, and, to the delight of the planters and the dismay of the Ryots and their friends, he decided that the so-called 'Fair Rent' on which the cultivators were entitled to security in their holdings, was the highest rent which the planters could obtain in the market. This decision struck at the root of all tenant-right, and was one of the first matters which attracted the attention of Sir John Lawrence when he came out as Viceroy.

After much consideration, Sir John Lawrence had made up his mind to propose an amendment to the law which Sir Barnes Peacock's decision had made to tell so strongly against the Ryots. 'We shall have,' he says, 'to take up the question of Act X. of 1859 next cold weather, and I anticipate a tough fight. But if Maine will really take it up *con amore*, we shall succeed. I fear, however, that the Ryots will never have fair play. There are too many and too strong interests against them. There will be much abuse heaped on our heads, but this we can bear.' Happily, it was not found necessary to have recourse to legislative action; for by great efforts on the part of the friends of the Ryots—of whom it is hardly necessary to say that the Viceroy was the head and soul—the decision of the Chief Justice,

in a similar case, was referred to the whole of the Judges of the High Court, when it was found that fourteen out of fifteen were in favour of reversing it, the one dissentient being Sir Barnes Peacock himself! They decided, in fact, that rents in Bengal were assessed, not under contract but under custom, and that they could only be enhanced in proportion to the enhanced value of the produce. The battle was thus, in some measure, won; and the result arrived at has proved to be equally beneficial to the rich and to the poor, to the planter and to the cultivator.

To another proposition which would, Sir John Lawrence thought, have pressed with almost equal severity on the Ryots in Bengal, he gave an equally uncompromising opposition. It had been said, while the indigo disputes were at their height, that Englishmen could never invest their capital in the country unless contracts made by them with the natives were enforced, not, as they are in all civilised countries, by an action for damages in a civil court, but by a criminal suit with the penalty of imprisonment. The Bill founded on this proposal was, aptly enough, named by the natives 'the Slavery Bill'; for serfdom, if not slavery, it would, assuredly, have brought on the Ryots, who would have fallen an easy prey to clever and unscrupulous land agents. Unable to read and often even to understand the provisions of the contract which they were cajoled into signing, they would have found themselves, on a sudden, clapped into prison, very possibly for some unconscious breach of its provisions. The Bill had, in 1860, actually passed into law for six months, and many natives had, during that period, been thrown into prison under its operation. But when, in 1861, the question came up, whether the Bill should be renewed or not, there was a great difference of opinion. Lord Canning and his Council said, 'Yes.' The Bengal Government and the Indigo Commission said 'No'; and Sir Charles Wood settled the matter by decisively supporting the latter. But the proposal was now revived, as Sir John Lawrence thought, in a hardly less deleterious shape, in some clauses called the 'Specific Performance' clauses, in an otherwise excellent measure. To these clauses, therefore, he offered a strenuous opposition.

This was the only question connected with the rights

of the tenants in which Sir John Lawrence found himself in partial opposition to the high authority of Henry Maine, his staunch ally in all such questions. But he continued to press his views with characteristic earnestness on each successive Secretary of State, Sir Charles Wood, Lord de Grey, Lord Cranborne, and Sir Stafford Northcote.

The controversy respecting tenant-right in Oude was much more complicated. It excited even more bitter feelings, and lasted even longer, than the controversy in Bengal. By the famous Oude Proclamation of 1858, Lord Canning had confiscated every acre in the country, except the property of a few so-called 'loyalists,' to the British Crown. He wished—so it would seem, judging by his subsequent acts—to make a *tabula rasa* of all previous claims and tenures in the country, and then to start afresh. Oude, it will be remembered, was the only province in the whole of India in which the inhabitants generally, and not least the landholders, had joined the mutineers. Lord Canning, therefore, before setting himself to right their wrongs, determined to commit one great apparent wrong the more, and so to make all alike feel that, whatever rights they received or retained, they owed them all to the free bounty of the British Crown. There is no doubt that the rights of the landowners had been rather cavalierly dealt with by us at the annexation of the country only three years before; and now the pendulum was to take a swing with much greater violence in the other direction. For Lord Canning's avowed object was to resuscitate, or rather to create, a great territorial aristocracy like that of England, whose interests should be bound up with the new settlement, and whose influence would be enlisted against any disaffection to English rule which might be felt by the masses of the people.

Of course, Lord Canning never intended to sacrifice all other interests and rights in the country to those of a naturally selfish aristocracy. On the contrary, each *sunnud*, or title-deed, which was given with the property to its old or new holder, contained a proviso which ran as follows:— 'It is a condition of this grant that you will, so far as it is in your power, promote the agricultural prosperity of your estate. And all who hold under you shall be secured in the

possession of all subordinate rights which formerly they enjoyed.' Now, in India, between the Talukdar, or superior landlord, and the Ryot, who is, sometimes, only a tenant at will, there are, as I have already hinted, usually to be found many intermediate grades of hereditary cultivators, men, that is, entitled—not so much by law as by custom, which is, to a great extent, the law of the East—to security of tenure on payment of a stipulated rent; and this rent is always less, and often very much less, than the marketable rent of the holding. What was to happen to all these classes, the very bone and sinew, as we had found them to be, of all other parts of the country? The settlement of the Revenue was just going on, and now, if ever, was the time to record their rights. But Sir Charles Wingfield, the Chief Commissioner of Oude, when he was asked by Sir John Lawrence what steps he was taking to preserve the subordinate rights in the land, answered that there were no such rights; in other words, that in Oude, henceforward, there were to be two classes, and only two, connected with the land—the great territorial magnates at one end of the scale, and the Ryots, or mere tenants-at-will, at the other.

Sir John Lawrence was not and could not be satisfied with this state of things. He felt indeed that it was possible and, even probable that the infamous government of the Nawabs, which had preceded our own, might have succeeded in obliterating, for the time, many of the most ancient and sacred rights of their subjects. But he knew also that those rights, especially those of the village communities, were endowed with strong and almost indestructible vitality; that, many times over in the history of India, they had been apparently swept away by the waves of Tartar, or Afghan, or Mahratta conquest, but that when the storm had passed by—sometimes not till many years after it had passed by—they had again raised their heads. These rights it had been our privilege and our pride in other provinces to search for and jealously to preserve. What, if the British conquest which had been the means of preserving or resuscitating these ancient rights in the North-West and in the Punjab, and with the best results, was now to be made the means of crushing them, beyond hope of resurrection, in Oude? The thought was intolerable to him. So he ordered an



inquiry to be made into the matter, and appointed Henry Davis, one of the ablest of the Punjab settlement officers, as a Special Commissioner, who was to give a fair hearing to any claims of the kind which might be brought before him.

This was a simple act of justice on his part. But it raised an outcry against him, compared with which all former outcries seemed but inarticulate or inaudible babble. The Talukdars became alarmed for their property. A cry of breach of faith was raised by the Press. The Governor-General, it was said, had determined, in accordance with his antecedents, to destroy the Talukdars and to create new rights, which would swallow up theirs. A letter was forged, which purported to come from the Government of India to the Special Commissioner in Oude, and bade him make short work of the landowners! It was published in the Indian newspapers by those who had, probably, had a large share in its concoction. The cool-headed Lord Stanley, who had so recently been Secretary of State for India, shared the alarm, and even Sir Charles Wood, who quite sympathised with Lawrence in his object, warned him of the danger of appearing to reverse Lord Canning's policy, which had been approved at home, or of any breach of faith with the Talukdars.

And how did Sir John Lawrence face the storm? Before taking a single step in the matter, he had drawn up a Memorandum which he sent to Sir Charles Wood and caused to be circulated amongst the members of both Councils. In this document he had set forth, in well-weighed language, alike his methods and his motives, and had answered, by anticipation, many of the objections which were now raised to his action. Accordingly, he now 'stood to his guns,' defended what he had done, pointed out that he had ordered 'inquiry' and nothing more, an inquiry which would establish indeed the rights of the cultivators, if any such were still found to exist, but would make the privileges of the landlords doubly secure and unimpeachable, if these rights had been extinguished. And so, taking the bit in his teeth, he declined to modify any of the instructions he had given to the Special Commissioner.

It was not very long before Sir Charles Wood himself admitted that the Governor-General had been right in what

he had done. Unfortunately, however, for the interest of the masses, the course of the investigation showed all too clearly what Sir John had half-feared from the beginning, that the intermediate rights which had been found by us to exist everywhere else in India, had, in Oude, been swept away by the acts of violence which had been the order of the day under the Nawabs. He had hoped for the best from all the work and worry he had gone through. But, conscious that he had done his duty, he was also prepared for the worst, and he writes thus to Currie on April 3 :—

I feel quite sure that I am right in all that I have done, and indeed that I could not have done less. . . . I have sent Sir Charles Wood a copy of one of Davies's letters giving his view of the probable results of the inquiry. Wingfield backs the Talukdars, and they hold to him. The cultivators are ignorant, timid, and poor. On the one side they are cajoled, on the other intimidated; the object being to tide over the period allowed for inquiry, when their chances will be gone. My object is to give them a fair and full chance of a hearing by impartial men. Having done this much, I have done my duty.

But I must cut a long story short. Sir Charles Wingfield retired in the spring of 1866, and was succeeded in his office of Chief Commissioner of Oude by Sir John Strachey, who, after a year or more of unceasing effort, succeeded in persuading the Talukdars to consent to an equitable compromise, which, if it did not do for the cultivators all which Sir John Lawrence had desired, obtained for them all that was practicable, and has helped to make Oude the tolerably peaceful and contented province which, since then, it has tended to become. The essential principles of the compromise arrived at were, on the one hand, that Government should create no new rights, and on the other, that the privileges which, practically, gave fixity of tenure, should, in the case of all cultivators who had been originally proprietors, be confirmed and secured by law. More important still, it was agreed that cultivators should be entitled, on the raising of their rent, to compensation for what would be called in England 'unexhausted improvements'; nor could the rent of such tenants as had been proprietors be raised except by application to a court of law and equity.

The question of Tenant Right in the Punjab I must

dismiss more briefly. At the first settlement of the province in 1853, after the English conquest, the usual record had been taken of all existing rights in the land. But, long afterwards, it appeared that many who now claimed to be superior landlords had neglected to register their names as such. Possibly, they had not thought it worth their while to do so, for the British *raj*, which had been established by the sword, might, as many of them hoped, and believed, be overthrown again by the sword at no distant period. Possibly, they imagined that if they registered themselves as tenants only they might get better terms from the State than if they called themselves owners. But, in any case, now that the time for a new settlement was approaching, when the value of land had much increased, and it was seen that the British rule was not to be overthrown, these same persons endeavoured to resuscitate their imagined rights at the cost of the sub-proprietors. And the settlement officers in the Punjab, with Edward Prinsep at their head, seemed inclined to favour their claims. The question which the Government had to decide was whether the rights of the many, which have existed from time immemorial, and which we had recognised for fifteen years past, should be sacrificed to the claims of the few. It must be remembered that rights of property had been very ill-defined under Sikh rule, and fifteen years of uninterrupted possession under our protection might well be supposed to confer as good a title as any Punjabi would care to have. It was calculated that if the proposals of the new settlement officers were adopted, out of 60,000 heads of families in the Umritsur district who were entitled to their tenancies at beneficial rates, not less than 46,000 would find themselves suddenly degraded, by a stroke of the pen, to the status of tenants-at-will, liable to rack rents and to eviction! This would be an agrarian revolution with a vengeance; and it was not likely that Sir John Lawrence, with his keen sympathy for the poorer classes, would see it carried out without an effort at least to mitigate its effects and to ease the fall of the beneficiary tenants.

Accordingly, after prolonged inquiry in the province, a Bill to define and amend the law relating to land tenancy in the Punjab was introduced into the Legislative Council

on January 17, 1868, by Edward Brandreth. But 'further inquiry' was demanded by the Opposition, which, in this instance, included Sir W. Mansfield, the Commander-in-Chief, Sir Henry Durand, the Military Member of Council, and Mr. Grey, the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, and they gained the day. The inquiries asked for were made. The conduct of the Bill passed into the hands of Sir Richard Temple, the new Finance Minister, and, on October 19, a great debate took place at Simla on the subject. He was warmly supported, in an exhaustive speech, by Sir Henry Maine, who had lately returned from England, by Sir John Strachey, whose experience in Oude had made him master of the subject, and by Mr. Noble Taylor. Sir Henry Durand had gone on furlough, and Sir Henry Norman, who was 'acting' for him, was also in favour of the Bill. More than this, Sir John Lawrence summed up the case in favour of the Bill in a speech which showed his abounding knowledge and his command of all the intricacies of the question. In the face of such support, the Opposition collapsed, and the Bill became law on that day.

There remains the important question of external policy, which has, in the popular imagination, come to be identified almost exclusively with the name of Sir John Lawrence, though nothing can be more certain than that it is *the* policy which has been constantly pursued, with more or less insight, and with more or less success, by every chief ruler of India, from the close of the ill-starred Governor-Generalship of Lord Auckland, down to the beginning of the equally ill-starred Viceroyalty of Lord Lytton. The policy, indeed, of Sir John Lawrence differed from that of the Viceroys who preceded or followed him, only, or chiefly, in the vast personal knowledge on which it was based. He possessed a knowledge, such as no other Viceroy could claim, of the physical features of the countries concerned, of the frontier line itself, of the aptitudes and characteristics of all the races who dwelt on each side of it; an acquaintance, in fact, at first hand, with all the conditions of the problem, physical and strategic, historical, political, and moral. He was, therefore, able to speak with greater authority on the subject, and was better armed at all points to resist the pressure certain to be brought to bear upon him by dashing

soldiers and by adventurous politicians, who were all eagerness for the abandonment of a policy which, eschewing aggression and conquest and holding that our responsibilities were already vast enough, regarded the good government and security of India itself as the first and sufficient object of an Indian statesman.

Thirty years ago,\* many hundred miles of steppe and desert still intervened between the Russian outposts on the Caspian and those of Afghanistan on the Oxus. To-day, the Lower Oxus has become a Russian stream and is traversed by Russian steamers. The three independent Khanates of Khiva, Bokhara, and Khokand have, for good or evil, been licked up by the advance of the Russian Colossus, as the ox licketh up the grass of the field. Persia is a puppet in the hand of Russia and must do her bidding. The wild Turcomans of the steppes, never before subdued by man, have yielded their submission. The oasis of Merv is threatened; and from Merv, as we have been often told, there is a comparatively rich river valley leading to Herat. It is the Russian factor, therefore, rather than the Afghan, which has, from the beginning, given a vivid and ever-increasing interest to the Central Asian question. It was the Russian factor which led us, more than forty years ago, into, perhaps, the greatest crime and greatest folly we have ever committed as a nation—the first Afghan War. It is the Russian factor which may now pride itself on having drawn us, with our eyes open, into a repetition of the same folly and the same crime, in the second Afghan War.

How was this great fact, or great danger, of the gradual advance of Russia towards our Indian frontier to be met? That it is, or may be, a real danger, no one who has seriously studied the subject will deny. Two very different answers have been given to the question; the one by what is called the Scinde, the other by the Punjab school of frontier policy.

The Scinde school looks back to General John Jacob, a man of great vigour and commanding personal qualities, as its founder, and it numbers among its advocates men as distinguished for their knowledge, their ability, or their enterprise as are Sir Henry Rawlinson, Sir Bartle Frere, Sir

\* Written in 1885.

Henry Green, Sir Lewis Pelly, Sir George Birdwood, and Sir William Merewether. These authorities have, for many years past, more or less consistently advocated, as the best means of anticipating an invasion of India, the military occupation first of Quetta, in Beloochistan, and then, as our own convenience may dictate, of Candahar and Herat. They have also, some at least of them, been anxious to extend English influence over other parts of Afghanistan, by stationing English envoys or Residents in its chief cities; by sending English officers to drill its armies; and by supporting, with our arts or with our arms, this or that periodical pretender to the blood-stained honour of the Afghan crown.

\* The Punjab school, with Sir John Lawrence at its head, and supported by successive Secretaries of State and successive Governors-General, as well as by some of the most splendid soldier-statesmen whom India has produced, have held wholly different views. They hold that to take any one of the steps advocated by the Scinde authorities is to go half-way to meet the dangers which we profess to fear; that it is to arouse the suspicion, the alarm, and the hatred of a fickle and a faithless, a fierce and a fanatical, but, at the same time, a brave and patriotic people, a people whom we have already deeply wronged, a people who, whatever their faults, are passionately attached to their freedom and their homes, and hate—as they have too good reason to do—the sight of any foreigner, and not least, it is sad to say it, of any Englishman among them; that it is to encourage those aggressive instincts of the Anglo-Saxon race which are, already, quite strong enough and which need all the tact and the talent, the firm will and the clear insight, of their responsible rulers to keep them under control; that it is to draw us away from our natural frontier of an almost impassable river and then of mountain wall piled behind mountain wall, a frontier where our resources are close at hand, and the population is, at least relatively, friendly, to a frontier which will be everywhere and yet nowhere, a will-o'-the-wisp, which, when it has lured us to an indefinite distance from our base, will leave us to fight our battles so much the nearer to our enemies, and with a population in our rear and at our flanks who will rob a victory

of half its fruits and will turn a defeat into our utter ruin ; that it is to guard against a future and contingent danger by neglecting those which lie beneath our feet ; that it is to concentrate the attention of English and Indian statesmen on matters over which they can exercise little appreciable influence ; that it is to make the imperial policy of India depend upon the flight of a random bullet or the dagger of a paradise-seeking Ghazi ; that it is to employ our Indian army on a service which they hate, and so to increase the difficulties of the recruiting officer, which are already formidable enough ; finally, that it is to throw away crores of rupees on barren mountain ridges and ever-vanishing frontier lines, while every rupee is sorely needed by a Government which can hardly pay its way, and by a vast population which, living on little more than starvation rates, cries aloud to be saved from the tax-gatherer on the one hand, and from actual starvation on the other. Each one of these propositions is capable of an amount of proof which to many minds seems almost demonstrative ; each supports, and yet each is independent of all the others ; and the whole have carried conviction to successive generations of enlightened and patriotic Indian statesmen.

Here was a policy which was, at least, manly, straightforward, unaggressive ; which was founded on an unequalled knowledge of the subject, and which, whether it was right or wrong, was laid down with express reference to the advance of the Russians, who sooner or later, and, probably, sooner than later, would find themselves on the Oxus and the Hindu Kush. If therefore this policy was right and wise in 1854 when the idea of the occupation of Quetta was first started by General John Jacob, it was also right, *mutatis mutandis*, in 1866, when the project was revived by Sir Henry Green and Sir Bartle Frere. It was right and wise in 1874, when Sir Bartle Frere, then a member of the Indian Council at home, wrote his famous letter to Sir John Kaye, which has done half the mischief. And, finally, it was right and wise in 1878, when Sir John Lawrence lifted up his voice, for the last time, against—what was then, unhappily, already a foregone conclusion—a war which he believed to be unnecessary and unjust, and which he knew

to be fatal to its avowed object and prejudicial to the highest interests of our Indian Empire.

It only remains for me, in the concluding portion of this chapter, to show briefly the steps which Sir John Lawrence took as Viceroy to carry out the policy which he had adopted, and its results as regards the relations of the two Powers, when he laid down his office in the beginning of 1869.

Dost Mohammed, the able, and, as Afghan notions go, the upright ruler of Afghanistan, and one of the most remarkable men whom Central Asia has produced, died at Herat in June 1863; a few months, that is, before Sir John Lawrence came out as Viceroy. His life had been a life of adventure and romance from the cradle to the grave. His father was an Afghan of the famous Barukzye clan, who had risen, by his ability, to be the Wuzir of the then recognised Suddozye sovereign. His mother was a despised Kuzzilbash. At the very youthful age of fourteen, he had taken Herat, that apple of discord of Central Asia; and, curiously enough, his very last exploit, when he was over seventy-five years of age, had been to march from Cabul and take it again.

By the usual Afghan combination of reckless daring and treacherous assassination, he had managed to drive the Suddozyes from the throne of their ancestors and, in his own person, to establish that of the Barukzyes in their place. He had invented and appropriated to himself the now famous title of '*Ameer i Mominan*,' or Commander of the Faithful, had welded the scattered and independent fragments of the Dourani Empire into one compact whole, had made an unsuccessful dash upon Peshawur, which, with Kashmere, had been torn from the Afghan Empire by Runjeet Sing, and had, for nearly forty years, ruled Afghanistan with prudence, justice, and moderation. 'Is Dost Mohammed dead, that there is no justice?' was a proverb common throughout his dominions, during the whole of those forty years. No nobler epitaph could be written upon the tomb of an Afghan prince.

This was the man whom, in a moment of temporary insanity, at the cost of twenty millions of money and the terrible massacre and humiliation of our armies, we had driven from his throne, and, then, had been driven to place



him on it again when we could find no one else—least of all Shah Soojah, the miserable puppet of our choice—who could win and hold that perilous honour. Once, and only once, during the Sikh war, had Dost Mohammed endeavoured to take his revenge upon us. From that time forward, thanks to the just and strong frontier policy pursued by Sir John Lawrence, he had shown us no ill-will. In two treaties concluded with us in 1855 and 1856, he had bound himself to be ‘the friend of our friends and the enemy of our enemies.’ He had received subsidies from us to aid him in his reconquest of Herat, and then he had remained staunch to us throughout the crisis of the Indian Mutiny, when every other Afghan was straining, like a hound within his leashes, to be let loose on the apparently defenceless quarry. Living to such an advanced age, Dost Mohammed would hardly have been an Asiatic if he had not married many wives and left behind him many sons. He would hardly have been an Afghan if those sons, who had been barely kept from flying at one another’s throats during their father’s lifetime by the respect which they all felt for him, had not prepared to make up for lost time, now that he was gone. Dost Mohammed had always foreseen that a fierce scramble for empire would inevitably take place at his death, and had advised Sir John Lawrence to have nothing to do with it. ‘Leave us and our country alone,’ he said to him in one of their interviews at Jumrood. ‘We are poor in everything but stones and men.’ ‘Never talk of sending a Resident to Cabul,’ was another of his bits of advice, ‘for, if I myself could not ensure his safety, much less will those who come after me.’ Golden words which fell on wise and willing ears!

Passing over the claims of his two eldest sons, Mohammed Afzul and Mohammed Azim Khan, who were full brothers, the Dost had named as his successor, Shere Ali, his third son by another wife. He was within his right in so doing. But such a choice—even though it were the choice of Dost Mohammed—was seldom binding on the consciences of the rest of the royal family; much less on that of the Afghans at large. He left sixteen surviving sons; and, of these, three were prepared to aim directly at the crown, while several of the others were bent on making themselves the

independent rulers of their respective provinces. Here, then, was a grand opportunity—as some people in India thought—for Sir John Lawrence to throw his own sword into the scale, to make one scrambler the more in the general *mêlée*, and to get something for England out of it; a grand opportunity, as Sir John Lawrence himself thought, and thought rightly, for holding entirely aloof, for showing that we had no selfish or aggressive aims, and for allowing the Afghans to settle their own quarrels in their own way. Had he been less firm, we should either have been involved, during the whole of his Viceroyalty, in the tangled web of Afghan blood-feuds; or, had we succeeded in putting our own candidate at once upon the throne, the mere fact that we had done so would have gone far to ensure a rising against him as soon as we retired from the capital, and then, the bloody process of natural selection, with or without our aid, would have had to be gone through, all over again.

For nearly five years, during the whole, that is, of Sir John Lawrence's Viceroyalty, the contest raged. There were the usual kaleidoscopic shiftings of scene and of the chief actors in it; exile and the battle-field, the throne and the durbar, the prison and the grave. There was the usual number of oaths sworn on the Koran and sworn only to be broken; of reconciliations ending in more deadly hate; of treacherous assassinations; of wholesale massacres. One month, Afzul Khan was languishing in a dungeon at Khelat-i-Ghilzai. The next, he was on the throne in Cabul, importuning Sir John Lawrence to recognise him as Ameer. One month, Azim Khan was in exile, a pensioner on Sir John Lawrence's bounty, at Rawul Pindi. The next, he was at the head of an army in the field. Anon, he was ruling Cabul in his brother Afzul's name; and then, when Afzul died, he became, from October 1867 to August 1868, the chief ruler of the whole country.

But what of Shere Ali, the *de jure* Ameer, if such a term may be used at all of one who has not yet proved that he has the only right which the Afghans ever recognise, the right of superior might? His fortunes were more chequered still. He had been recognised by Sir William Denison as the successor of his father, just before Sir John Lawrence landed. But he was hardly seated upon the throne when he found

that he had to fight for it. Four rival claimants started up, and just after he had apparently succeeded, at the end of the first two years of his reign (1865), in beating them off, they rose again in greater strength; and, this time, it was his turn to lose. He was driven, first from Balkh, then from Cabul, then from Candahar; and, at last, he took refuge in Herat, the only corner of Afghanistan in which he could keep a precarious foothold, and was obliged to look quietly on while his two elder brothers occupied his throne in succession.

Yet he never gave up the contest. He was in truth a remarkable man, this son of Dost Mohammed, and was destined to fill a large place in the fortunes of Central Asia during the next fifteen years. He was, if I may so call him, the Saul of Afghan history. He was a Saul, in his commanding aspect, in his generous impulses, in his warm affections, in his brooding melancholy, in his mad jealousy, in his outburst of ferocity against those whom he loved most dearly, finally, in that ineffable dignity, which a long train of calamities that are only half-merited, seldom fails to confer upon a man who has aught that is noble in his character or his antecedents. He was, in short, one of those mixed characters, half noble and half 'passion ravaged,' whom the great Greek philosopher pronounced to be the proper subject for tragedy. He had given a kiss of peace to his half-brother Afzul Khan, had sworn fidelity to him on the Koran, and then, for a fancied offence of Afzul's son, Abdurrahman—the very man whom, in the strange whirligig of fortune, we have just placed on a precarious throne, a pensioner of Russia to oppose Russian ambition—he ordered him, in public Durbar, to be thrown into chains. In the battle which followed he was doomed to see his own full brother fall by the hands of the son whom he idolised, and that same idolised son fall, at the same moment, by the hand of his brother; and, as he touchingly said in his despatch, 'all the joys of the victory were clouded by his loss.' For several months thereafter, he shut himself up in an inner chamber at Candahar, refusing, like Saul's great rival of old, to be comforted. He declined to see anyone but a few personal attendants; now bursting out into paroxysms of fury against friend and foe alike; now

talking of a pilgrimage to Mecca ; and, now again, in the wild frenzy of his grief, plunging, at midnight, into a tank of water and grovelling along the bottom in the hope that he might there find the body of his lost darling. 'O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom ! would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son !'

Better known, perhaps, but not more deserving to be known, are the stories of his wild grief, years afterwards, over the death of his Benjamin, the son of his old age, Abdulla Jan ; of his romantic admiration for Lord Mayo ; his fervent declaration that he would wield the sword which Lord Mayo had given him against the enemies of England everywhere ; his pathetic letter upon Lord Mayo's death ; his moving appeal, some years afterwards, to those who had neither ears to hear nor hearts to feel, not to force upon him an English envoy whose life he could not guarantee and whose presence, as he too truly foresaw, would be, a sentence of death to him and to his country. It certainly adds a sting the more to the bitter memories of the second Afghan war, that the man with whom we deliberately picked a quarrel, and whom, in the course of it, we drove from his dominions, to die in misery and in exile, was a man of the strongly marked character I have described—a man, who, moody and capricious as he was, had shown himself, during many years, to be anxious for our friendship, had governed Afghanistan well, according to his lights, had regarded Lord Lawrence with reverence, Lord Mayo with passionate affection, Lord Northbrook, in spite of some disappointed hopes, without any feelings of hostility, had looked, in fact, upon the word of each successive Viceroy as his bond, and as the bond of England, till, in an evil moment for our fair fame, a second moment of temporary insanity, we undid all that had been done, broke, alike, the faith of treaties and the promises of successive Viceroys, and involved ourselves in the shameful reverses and the costly and Cadmean victories of one more Afghan war.

But fortune was, for the time at least, to smile on Shere Ali. In the autumn of 1868, he found himself once again in Cabul, Azim, his last formidable adversary, having been driven hopeless and helpless into Balkh. He was thus, once again, the *de facto* as well as the *de jure* Ameer, and Sir John

Lawrence was free to act on the lines of the policy which he had laid down from the beginning of the struggle, the policy of recognising any claimant on whom the deliberate choice of the Afghan people should fall, and—without committing himself to a one-sided alliance which would be a temptation to misgovernment, and, perhaps, a charter for it—to give him such assistance, from time to time, as one friend may give to another, if he shows himself to be deserving of it. To every application for aid or for recognition, whether it had come from Shere Ali or from one of his rivals, he had, from considerations of humanity, as well as policy, so long as the contest lasted, turned a deaf ear. In vain, had one of the candidates offered him, as a bribe, an alliance between Afghanistan and England against Russia. In vain, had another inverted the proposal, and threatened him with an alliance of Afghanistan and Russia against England. In vain, had the vague and mysterious terrors of that ‘old man of the mountain,’ the Akhund of Swat, been held up before his eyes. To have given aid or recognition or to have shown any sign of flinching from the policy of neutrality which he had laid down, would have been to assist in putting upon the Afghan throne a man whom, perchance, the majority of the Afghans might already hate, and whom, assuredly, they would hate the more, if we raised a finger to help in placing him there.

But now the case was altered. With the full approval of the Conservative Government at home, who, by the mouth of Sir Stafford Northcote, expressed unlimited confidence in anything which Sir John Lawrence should advise or do, 60,000*l.* were given to the Ameer to help him in organising his newly fledged authority and in repairing the waste which the long civil war had made; while hopes of favours to come, should his Government prove to be ‘strong, just, and merciful,’ confirmed him in his friendly feelings towards us. A proposal which originated with him to pay a visit to the Punjab, and there hold a personal conference with Sir John Lawrence, his father’s friend, was favourably received; and Sir John lingered on at Simla longer than usual in November, in order that he might gratify the wish. But this was not to be. The smouldering embers of disaffection warned Shere Ali not to leave Cabul till they had died or

had been trampled out; and Sir John Lawrence, as the best thing which he could do for Shere Ali himself, for his own successors in the Viceroyalty, and for the future of both countries, determined to leave behind him, on record, a statement of the motives which had guided, and of the principles which he hoped might still guide, our relations with Afghanistan. No more valuable testamentary bequest could he have bequeathed, and its immediate and legitimate result, nothing more and nothing less, was the famous Umballa Durbar, held in the March following, by his successor, when Shere Ali, though many of his requests were necessarily refused by Lord Mayo, went away charmed with his reception, swearing, as I have already mentioned, that he would wield the sword which had been given him, in defence of England, and convinced that he had nothing to fear and much to hope for from our disinterested friendship.

On January 11—the day, that is, before Lord Mayo was to arrive—a farewell dinner was given to the departing Viceroy in the Town Hall of Calcutta. The guests were two hundred and fifty in number, and formed a fair representation of all classes of the English community—of all, in fact, except a small portion of the Calcutta merchants who absented themselves on grounds which were creditable, not to themselves, but to Sir John Lawrence. The Judges of the Supreme Court, the members of the Executive and Legislative Councils, the Lieutenant-Governors of Bengal, of the North-West, and of the Punjab, sat in close proximity to the chief guests. Sir William Mansfield, the Commander-in-Chief, presided, and in a speech which was worthy of the occasion, passed under review the whole career of Sir John Lawrence, from the days when, at the outbreak of the first Punjab war, he, the speaker, was marching with his regiment to the scene of operations, and was told on all hands that ‘the supplies for the war were to come from John Lawrence;’ in other words, that the plain and little-known civilian was ‘the base of operations;’ and so, through the time of the second Punjab war, the Punjab Board, the Chief Commissionership of the Punjab, and the Mutiny, in which, as he truly observed, Sir John Lawrence had won greatness enough for any single man, right on to the Viceroyalty, in which, as

he went on to observe with equal truth, Sir John had added yet more to the lustre of his name.

At last, Sir John Lawrence rose to reply. He spoke in a low and broken voice, which, more than once, hesitated from emotion, and could be distinctly heard by those only who were near at hand. He, too, reviewed his own career, and with genuine modesty reminded his hearers, that no small part of his success was due 'to the officers with whom he had worked, and to his countrymen in India.' Nor did he forget to pay a warm tribute to the sterling qualities of the natives of Upper India, among whom he had laboured for nearly forty years, those with whom he had sympathised so keenly, and had understood so well. Then, alluding to his foreign policy, for which he had been so much attacked, he declared that 'he had never shrunk from war when honour and justice required it, but pointed out that to have continued the wars in Bhotan and Huzara, after their purpose had been answered, would have been neither wise nor merciful.' To the charge that he had followed a supine and inert policy in Central Asia he gave an emphatic contradiction. 'I have watched,' he said, 'very carefully all that has gone on in those distant countries.' It was true that he had set his face against all projects which seemed likely to involve an active interference in Central Asia, because such interference 'would almost certainly lead to war, the end of which no one could foresee, and which would involve India in heavy debt, or necessitate the imposition of fresh taxation, to the impoverishment of the country, and the unpopularity of our rule.' 'Our true policy,' he added, 'is to avoid such complications, to consolidate our power in India, to give to its people the best government we can, to organise our administration in every department on a system which will combine economy with efficiency, and so to make our Government strong and respected in our own territories.' By so doing, and standing fast on our own border, we should be best prepared to repel invasion, if it should ever come. And when, as his parting counsel, as the last of his last words, he urged his countrymen 'to be just and kind to the natives of India,' his words were received with a storm of long-continued and earnest cheering, such as one who had been present at many public gatherings

in Calcutta, from the days of Lord Dalhousie downwards, declared that he had never before witnessed. No one, indeed, who was present could doubt that if the departing Viceroy was not 'popular' in the ordinary and superficial sense of the word, he possessed that which was much more worth having, the confidence and the admiration of his countrymen ; and that he could render to them the best of services by stirring within them their noblest selves.



## CHAPTER XXX.

### LAST YEARS OF LORD LAWRENCE.

1869-1879.

THE rest is soon told. Sir John Lawrence had yet some ten years to live. But they were years, comparatively speaking, of leisure and domestic enjoyment. I have, in a previous chapter, described his private life in detail, and have thrown into it, by anticipation, some of the touches and traits of character, and some also of the incidents which, chronologically, belong rather to this later period of his life. I feel, therefore, that to go over the ground again might weaken, rather than strengthen, the impression which I have endeavoured to convey of the home life of a man, whose *otium* would never be *otiosum*, who was always sure to find work to do and to do it with his might, and the kindness of whose heart was in direct proportion to the downright manner, the firm will, and the untiring energy which were among the distinguishing features of his life.

On his way to England, he stopped for a week in Ceylon, that he might see the country and inspect some coffee plantations in which he had an interest, and in the management of which he then thought that one or more of his sons might find a suitable occupation. His visit made him think otherwise. He landed in England on March 15, 1869, looking, as some of those who knew him best thought, 'much broken.' He might well look so. He had been suffering throughout his Viceroyalty, as he himself and his medical attendant knew well,—though he allowed hardly anyone else to know it,—from a wearing, if not exactly a dangerous, disease, which, if it had made his work doubly

heavy, and had necessitated strict rules of diet, had never induced him to slacken speed for an instant. 'No arrears' had been the motto of the whole of his official life. He had succeeded to a Viceroyalty which was overburdened with them, and he had determined, whatever it cost him, that his successor should not begin under a similar disadvantage. The doctors whom he consulted in England thought that, with care, he might still do well. He made little change in his usual active habits of life. He went out in all weathers and never worried himself about his health, and so it returned to him all the faster. He entered into and enjoyed the society which was at his command, and friends, new and old, once more gathered round him. For worldly honours he cared little or nothing. He had taken them, when they had come in his way, more for the sake of those dear to him than for his own. He had never sought such things; and no amount of them every turned his head, ever made him give up any one of his favourite maxims or habits, ever made him to his old friends other than the simple-hearted John Lawrence that he had always been.

It was one of the Duke of Argyll's first acts, as Secretary of State for India, to recommend him for the honour which had been so long deserved and so long delayed. 'Some weeks ago,' said Mr. Gladstone, writing to him shortly after his arrival, 'on the suggestion of the Duke of Argyll, I took the Queen's pleasure on my recommendation that a peerage should be offered you in acknowledgment of your high character and distinguished services; and I am truly glad to learn this day that you accept the offer which the Queen authorised me to make. I congratulate the House of Lords, not less than yourself, on this result.'

Sir John Lawrence cared far more for the good opinion of those who had watched his career than for the stamp that was thus put upon it. The conversion of his annuity of 2,000*l.* a year into a pension for his own life and for that of his next successor in the peerage—a change which was made by the Indian Council—showed what Indian experts felt of his services; while the cheers which greeted him on both sides of the House of Lords, as he rose, on April 19, to deliver his maiden speech in support of a bill for limiting a seat on the Indian Council to ten years, showed what the

members of the Order from which he had not sprung thought of his elevation to it.

The title which he selected was 'Lord Lawrence of the Punjab and of Grateley ;' and none certainly could have been more appropriate. 'Grateley' commemorated his affection for his sister, who had left him the small estate, in Salisbury Plain, which was to make the new peer, in some slight sense, a member of the 'territorial aristocracy ;' while 'the Punjab' recalled the services which not he alone, but the whole family of Lawrences, had, according to their respective opportunities and abilities, rendered in one of the latest, and, perhaps, the most important acquisition of the English Crown in India. Some months before the return of her husband, Lady Lawrence had left Southgate, and had taken a house for a year at 12 Queen's Gate ; and it was here, on March 15, that the family meeting took place. An interval of full five years had made a great change in all its inmates. Sir John Lawrence's boys had grown, some of them, into men. The eldest son, John, had taken his degree at Cambridge, and was reading for the bar ; the second, Henry, after passing through Wellington College, had gone into business ; the third, Charles, was at school at Marlborough ; while the fourth, Bertie, the Benjamin of the family, was, to the great distress of his parents, about, for the first time, to leave home for school.

In the autumn of 1869, after the labours of house hunting and furnishing had been completed, he was able to settle down at No. 26 Queen's Gate. An occasional game of croquet in the adjoining Horticultural Gardens, into which he entered with all his old zest, and an occasional day's shooting at Quex Park, a place near Margate, which he took for the autumn months of 1870, were his chiefs relaxations. In the following winter, the election of the first London School Board was to take place, in accordance with the provisions of Mr. Forster's great Education Act. Some of the foremost educationists of the nation were anxious to get a seat upon it, and Lord Lawrence felt no little surprise when he was invited to stand for the Kensington District. Many of his friends advised him against it on the score of his health. It was not work for which he had any special aptitude. But he had done something for education in

India. He saw that there was good work to be done in the same direction in England ; and when he was assured by those whom he could trust that he might help the cause alike by his name and by his advice, he would not hang back, and he was elected by a large majority.

The first duty of the new Board was to elect a Chairman. Several private meetings had already been held to discuss the merits of the various candidates who were likely to be nominated, and it was soon seen that the only possible rival to Lord Lawrence would be Mr. Charles Reed, who was strongly supported by the Nonconformists. But, at the first public meeting at the Guildhall, the ballot disposed of all other claims, and Lord Lawrence was unanimously elected Chairman, with Mr. Reed as his Deputy-chairman.

There are, as I have remarked before, few more characteristic acts in Sir John Lawrence's life than his becoming Chairman of the School Board. He hated all Boards as such. The Punjab Board, the Indian Council at home, the Legislative Council, and even the Executive Council in India, had, none of them, been quite to his liking. He was a man of action. He disliked talking for talking's sake ; and, at all Boards, even the best regulated, there is, probably, much more of talk than of work. Those who are the best talkers necessarily occupy most of the time and, not unfrequently, have the most influence. Soundness of judgment, impartiality, patience, untiring attention, profound knowledge are apt to be overborne by the mere flow of words. Lord Lawrence was never a ready speaker. He was not naturally patient. He had not those peculiar gifts of tact and versatility which sometimes make a man, who is by no means commanding in other respects, a first-rate Chairman. Yet with imperturbable patience—as the members of the Board in general, and as Sir Charles Reed and Mr. Edward Buxton, his successors, in particular, testify—he listened, week after week, to speeches which were delivered by the members as much to their constituents as to their colleagues ; and not unfrequently, by his few closing words and by the weight of his character combined, he succeeded in bringing even some rather violent partisans over to his views. He had, as everyone knew, decided religious convictions of his own. But, just as in India, his strong good

sense and his love of justice had prevented him from being carried away by the arguments of those who would have 'eliminated,' as they called it, 'all unchristian principles from the Government of India,' and in the process, would have swept away much that is of the very essence of Christianity, its dealing with others as they would themselves be dealt by, its tolerance, its charity, its comprehensiveness, so, now, it was the same habit of mind, preserved during even the upheaval of the Mutiny, which enabled him to hold the balance between the extreme views of those who, if they could have had their way, would have turned schools supported by the State into engines of religious proselytism, and those who would have excluded religion, and even religious influence, altogether from the school course.

In November, 1873, Lord Lawrence retired from the School Board, having served his full three years upon it. His family did not wish him to stand again, for his health no longer seemed equal to it. The work which he had done as Chairman had not been showy—he would have hated that it should be—but it had been real; and its effects were to be lasting. The leading principles on which the Board was to work had been settled beforehand by Mr. Forster's Bill. But the great question whether religious instruction was to be given in the Board schools, or not, had been purposely left open. In this matter, Lord Lawrence took a large part; and, after long debates, in the year 1871, the important resolution was arrived at, which has subsequently been adopted by the majority of School Boards in England and in Wales, 'that the Bible should be read, and that there should be given such explanations and such instructions therefrom in the principles of morality and religion, as are suited to the capacities of children.' In other respects, the work was chiefly that of detail; the lines for the subsequent operations of the Board were laid down, and the machinery devised and set in motion.

In London, Lord Lawrence still found charitable work of every kind ready to his hand. Whenever his advice was asked, or he felt that it could be given with effect, he attended the committee meetings of the Church Missionary Society, and took a deep interest in their proceedings.

He made great efforts to extricate the Home for Crippled

Boys in Kensington from the debt in which it was involved, and at last succeeded in putting it on a satisfactory footing. He took much interest also in Lady Kinnaird's work in the East of London, and became Chairman of the Committee for giving relief to working women. Many appeals for help came to him, and no poor woman was ever sent away without her case being carefully inquired into, and, if necessary, substantial help given.

For some five years past, Lord Lawrence had had the infinite satisfaction of feeling that Lord Granville and the Duke of Argyll at home, and Lord Mayo and Lord Northbrook in India, were strenuously endeavouring to carry out the policy which he had consistently advocated towards Afghanistan, towards Central Asia, and towards Russia. In particular, a friendly understanding had been arrived at with the great northern Power that she should leave Afghanistan alone; while we, on our part, were to endeavour, by peaceful means, to persuade the Ameer not to intrigue in the Central Asian states beyond the Oxus. The peaceful progress which had been the chief characteristic of his own administration had thus also characterised the all too brief Viceroyalty of Lord Mayo, and seemed likely to attend that of Lord Northbrook to its close. The pledges of friendly feeling and of non-interference given by Sir John Lawrence to Dost Mohammed in 1855 and 1856 at Jumrud, and, afterwards, to Shere Ali as the last act of his Viceroyalty in 1869, had been endorsed by Lord Mayo at Umballa, and had been renewed, with still more explicit assurances, by Lord Northbrook, at Simla, in 1873.

But, in 1874, came a change of Ministry in England, and with it, the first symptoms of a change in our frontier policy towards Afghanistan. Lord Salisbury was now once more Secretary of State for India, and, with his accession to office, he seemed to throw to the winds all the maxims and principles of frontier policy which Lord Cranborne had held most dear. No doubt, many things had happened since 1866; but nothing connected with the advance of Russia which had not been foreseen, nothing which the policy that was then approved by him, had not been laid down to meet. All the fundamental conditions of the Central Asian problem were the same. The Afghan character was the same;

the Afghan frontier was the same ; the eternal mountains were the same ; the Scinde desert and the barren steppes of Central Asia were the same ; the poverty of the Indian population was the same ; the principles of moderation, justice, and good faith were still the same. Why then the change ?

In June, 1874, Sir Bartle Frere, who was then a member of Lord Salisbury's Council, came to the front, once more, as an advocate of that ' forward policy ' which had been tried and condemned thirty years before. In an able letter, which was nominally addressed to Sir John Kaye, he advocated the immediate occupation of Quetta ; the construction of a railway across the desert to the Bolan Pass, by peaceable arrangement, if possible, but if not, by the strong arm ; the placing of English agents at Herat, Candahar, and—let it be specially noted—at *Cabul* ; the establishment of a ' Perfect Intelligence Department ' in Afghanistan, and, if possible, of our preponderating influence throughout the country. These proposals, it has been reserved for him to discover in 1881, were in no way aggressive proposals, but were dictated in a spirit of pure philanthropy, for the good alike of the Afghans and ourselves !

This letter was circulated among the members of the Indian Council, and was afterwards sent by Lord Salisbury to Lord Lawrence at Brockett Hall, for his opinion on it.

On November 4, Lord Lawrence wrote a masterly reply, in which, after alluding to his personal knowledge of the Afghan character and the Afghan frontier, he pointed out that the policy advocated by Sir Bartle Frere, so far from stopping the advance of Russia, would be likely to facilitate and accelerate it ; that it would lead to difficulties and complications such as we had experienced in 1838, and that it would, in this way, prove ruinous to the finances of India ; that the occupation of Quetta meant nothing, except as part of a policy of advance to Candahar and Herat ; that it would be costly ; that it would be unsafe ; that it would inevitably arouse the suspicions of the Ameer as the first step towards the invasion of his country ; that the presence of British officers in Afghanistan must, in the long run, turn the Afghans against us ; that they would be got rid of by Afghan methods ; that assassination would

be followed by war, and that again by occupation or annexation. As regards the advance of Russia with hostile intention, while he deprecated giving her any needless offence, or taking any fidgety precautions, he would adopt such measures from time to time as prudence might dictate; but 'the great point,' he added, 'in this matter is, that Russia should understand that England is prepared to defend her hold in India at any cost. Nothing short of this will suffice if the march of events brings Russia towards the frontier of India; but that conviction of England's resolution will, I believe, prove quite effectual.'

Sir Bartle Frere replied to Lord Lawrence's Memorandum in a much more lengthy paper, dated January 11, 1875, and Lord Lawrence was about, once more, to slay him in argument, when Lord Salisbury intervened and begged him to hold his hand. He had gone over to the views of Sir Bartle Frere, and it was obviously desirable, under such circumstances, that Sir Bartle Frere, as he has contrived to do on at least one notable occasion since then, should have the last word. At about the same time, on January 22, without having previously consulted the Government of India, Lord Salisbury sent the first of those disastrous despatches to Lord Northbrook which bade him begin to undo the work of thirty years and in the direction recommended by Sir Bartle Frere.

Lord Northbrook, supported by the whole weight of his Council, which contained such well-known names as those of Lord Napier of Magdala, Sir Henry Norman, Sir William Muir, Sir Ashley Eden, and Sir Arthur Hobhouse, and supported also by the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab, and by all the local authorities whom he consulted, stoutly resisted the proposals of Lord Salisbury, and, for a whole year, managed to fight them off by argument and by pleas for delay. And before the instructions became peremptory he had resigned his office, so that it did not fall to his lot to carry out measures of which he and all who knew the facts so deeply disapproved.

A more supple instrument lay ready to Lord Salisbury's hand, and Lord Lytton went to India, pledged to carry out the new and fatal policy. Before he started, Lord Lawrence called upon him, and the veteran Governor-General poured



forth freely to him, as it was his wont to do to all inquirers, all the wealth of his Indian knowledge. Determined to lead up to the point on which he had a shrewd suspicion that his advice was most needed, and on which it would be likely to be last asked or acted on, he said point-blank, 'Then about the frontier policy?' 'Oh, thank you,' replied Lord Lytton, 'I know your views on that question,' and so avoided a discussion which might have been inconvenient.

Lord Lytton landed in India in April 1876, charged with definite instructions to find a pretext if he could, and if not, then to invent one, for the despatch of a temporary embassy to Cabul, which was afterwards to be made the means of establishing a permanent mission within the frontiers of Afghanistan. It was a task not for a statesman but for a diplomatist, and that, too, one of not the highest type. But there were difficulties in the way which not even Lord Lytton's high-handed threats to 'wipe Afghanistan altogether out of the map' in concert with Russia, nor his complimentary comparison of it to 'a pipkin between two iron pots,' could at once remove. Accordingly, his first practical step was that which had been recommended so persistently by Sir Bartle Frere and his allies, the occupation of Quetta, an advanced post, two hundred and fifty miles beyond its nearest supports, and to be approached, first, through a burning desert which is swept, during a portion of the year, by the 'blast of death'; and then, as Sir Harry Lumsden described it, through 'a long, difficult, and in many places waterless pass, flanked all the way by wild and warlike tribes.' This was the first step in the policy of aggression, and was taken in January and February 1877.

Next, came the 'Peshawur Conference' between Nur Mohammed, the representative of the Ameer, and Sir Lewis Pelly, the mouthpiece of Lord Lytton. And it is difficult even now, at this distance of time, to read, unmoved, the earnest appeals of the Ameer to the faith of treaties, and to the promises and untarnished honour of Lord Lawrence, Lord Mayo, and Lord Northbrook; finally, the piteous cry for mercy, when the appeal to justice was unavailing, in order to ward off that which Lord Lytton laid down as *ex sine qua non* of any further negotiations, the residence of British officers in Afghanistan. 'Matters,' said the

Afghan envoy, 'have now come to a crisis, and the situation is a grave one. This is the best opportunity for a settlement, and God only knows the future. . . . The British nation is great and powerful, and the Afghan people cannot resist its power ; but the people are self-willed and independent, and prize their homes above their lives. . . . You must not impose upon us a burden which we cannot bear ; if you overload us, the responsibility rests with you.' When asked what the burden to which he alluded was, he at once replied, 'The residence of British officers within the frontiers of Afghanistan.' 'We mistrust you, and fear you will write all sorts of reports about us, which will, some day, be brought forward against us, and lead to your taking the control of our affairs out of our hands. . . . The people of Afghanistan have a dread of this proposal, and it is firmly fixed in their minds and deeply rooted in their hearts, that if Englishmen or other Europeans once set foot in their country, it will sooner or later pass out of their hands.' Finding that the Ameer stood firm, as well he might, on this point, Lord Lytton abruptly broke off the conference. He 'repudiated all liabilities of the British Government towards the Ameer,' and, having told him that he should henceforward feel free to strengthen the frontiers of British India without further reference to him, shortly afterwards withdrew his native envoy altogether from his court. This was step number two.

For a time, the worst misgivings of the two ex-Governors-General, Lord Lawrence and Lord Northbrook, and of three ex-Secretaries of State for India, Lord Halifax, Lord Ripon, and the Duke of Argyll, all of whom were, I believe, present at the time, had been allayed by the strangely misleading answer given by Lord Salisbury, on June 15, 1877, to a point-blank question of the Duke of Argyll's, whether any serious change was contemplated in the policy hitherto observed towards Afghanistan. It will hardly be believed by subsequent generations if they know the full facts of the case, that the answer given by Lord Salisbury, the responsible minister of the Crown, and a man fitted by his abilities to fill and to adorn any post, was that *no* attempt had been made to force an envoy upon the Ameer at Cabul, that our relations with him had *not*, since last year, undergone any

material change, and that his feelings were in *no* way more embittered towards the British Government. But the answer effected its object. It stopped further questions, it burked all discussion in Parliament till the session was over, and then the Government was free to complete the work which it had set in train. It is absolutely necessary to dwell on these circumstances, unsavoury though they are, if we are to estimate aright Lord Lawrence's subsequent action ; for it is at least possible that if the simple truth had been told in June, the debate in Parliament which must have ensued would have brought out so clearly the opinions of everyone who was an authority on the subject, that the eyes of the Government would have been opened to the blind folly of the course which they were pursuing, and that the final steps which plunged us into the miseries and dangers of another Afghan war would never have been taken.

In the previous spring, our relations with Russia had, by whosoever fault, been strained almost to the very verge of war ; and in order, it would seem, to effect a diversion, and to frighten us in the quarter in which, by bringing Indian troops to Europe, we had attempted to frighten them, the Russians now despatched an embassy under General Abramoff to Cabul. The Ameer, bullied and browbeaten by Lord Lytton—who had broken off, it must be remembered, all diplomatic relations with him—and still threatened with that visitation from English officers which successive Governors-General had promised never to impose upon him, fought off the Russian proposal as long as possible, and at last, with extreme reluctance, consented to receive the embassy. The despatch of that embassy was, as it seems to me, a perfectly legitimate act on the part of Russia, when war with England seemed imminent. It ceased to be legitimate the moment that peaceful relations were restored. In any case, as soon as the treaty was signed, the English Government was in a position to remind Russia of her previous agreement, and with the whole of the country—Liberal, as well as Conservative, the Duke of Argyll, Lord Lawrence, and Lord Northbrook, as well as Lord Salisbury and Lord Cranbrook—at its back to call upon her to withdraw altogether from the country in which we had warned her that she should not, and she had promised us that she

would not, attempt to exercise any influence. This was the bold, the upright, the only honourable course. Instead of this, we must bite and maul the weak, while we contented ourselves with barking, or with hardly even barking, at the strong. We attacked those who had done us no harm, while we allowed the real offender to get off scot-free. If we had only given the Russians rope enough to hang themselves—if, that is, we had given them time, the Afghans would, infallibly, have turned against them, and they, not we, would have been looked upon as the enemies of Afghan independence.

Instead of that, we must servilely follow the example of Russia, and that, too, without taking any of her precautions. And such was Lord Lytton's knowledge of Eastern courtesies, or his respect for them, that the mission under Sir Neville Chamberlain was actually despatched for Cabul without any inquiry whether it would be welcomed by the Ameer, or, even, whether it would be allowed to pass. Of course, it was turned back from Ali Musjid by the officer in command, but, as Major Cavagnari himself admitted, and as everybody now knows, with the utmost possible courtesy on the part of all concerned. But it gave the opportunity for which Lord Lytton had long been waiting. Telegrams were sent to England to the effect that the officer had grossly insulted our envoy. The pugnacious spirit of the country was aroused, and war was all but declared. Could anything be done to stop it?

There was one man, and perhaps only one in the country, who, from the weight of his character, from his reverence for the right, from his profound knowledge of the subject, from his splendid services in India, could hope, even now, to gain a hearing, and to have a chance—a small one it is true, but still a chance—of stopping, even now, the mischief. Lord Lawrence had gone down, as I have related, for his autumn holiday to a house near Broadstairs in the Isle of Thanet, and all the motives which usually operate most powerfully on men would seem to have conspired to drive him to hold his tongue. His peculiar position as an ex-Viceroy, of course, called him to think once, twice, and thrice before he did anything which might embarrass the existing Viceroy in his time of trouble, even though that

trouble was self-sought. His advanced age, his feeble frame, his blindness, his inability any longer either to read or to write, were so many valid excuses for not entering on an almost hopeless crusade against a strong popular feeling, against a patriotic cry, against a Government strong in its Parliamentary majority, and in the favour of the Court and of the Crown. It was certain that he would incur all but universal obloquy; that his motives would be misinterpreted; that he would be accused of party feeling, of prejudice, of want of spirit, of want of patriotism, of all the influences, in fact, which had never had a particle of influence upon him; that his previous services would be forgotten, or made light of; that the whole of his policy would, for the time, be discredited, and that he, who had been hailed the chief saviour of an empire, would die, as in the course of nature he soon must, disliked and suspected by those for whom he had saved it. Many of his relations, many of his friends, private and political alike, bade him think of these things and acquiesce in the inevitable. But not so thought John Lawrence, who 'did his duty to the last.' He saw all this, and he deliberately threw it aside. He felt that he had enjoyed peculiar opportunities for forming a right opinion; he felt that the Government and the nation were rushing, blindfold, into a quagmire; and, in my judgment, there is no single step in the whole of his heroic life which was taken from purer motives, which showed a more lively sense of honour, a more genuine patriotism, a more unflinching moral courage; in a word, which is more characteristic of the man, than this. Here is his first letter to the 'Times':—

#### AFGHANISTAN.

*To the Editor of the 'Times.'*

Sir,—The news from Peshawur which appeared in the 'Times' of the 23rd inst., telling us that the Ameer of Cabul had refused to receive the proposed Mission on its way to his capital, and had forced Major Cavagnari to turn back from Ali Musjid, is, no doubt, a serious rebuff to the Government of India, more particularly so as the Mission had actually started. It seems to me to have been a serious mistake organising a Mission to Cabul before we had ascertained whether Ameer Shere Ali was prepared to receive our overtures or not, and a still greater mistake despatching the Mission until we had received his consent to

our doing so. Had these precautions been observed, the affront which we have met with would not have appeared to be so flagrant as it now does. But, however vexatious is the Ameer's conduct in this matter, it ought not to lead us to force our Mission on him; still less should it induce us to declare war against him. It appears to me to be contrary to sound policy that we should resent our disappointment by force of arms; for, by so doing, we play the enemy's game and force the Afghans into a union with the Russians.

We ought not, indeed, to be surprised that the Ameer has acted as he has done. From the time of the Treaty of 1857, the late Ameer, Dost Mohammed Khan, refused to allow us to have a Mission at Cabul, or even to send one there as a temporary arrangement, solemnly assuring us that such a step would lead to mischief and not to peaceful relations with the Afghans. We accepted his excuses. In 1869, the present Ameer affirmed the same policy. Whatever may be his own faults and shortcomings, he has never concealed from us his views on this subject. What occurred at the meeting in Peshawur towards the end of 1876 between the Ameer's agent and Sir Lewis Pelly has not actually transpired; but I believe that our wishes on the subject of a Mission to Cabul were at that time reiterated, though in vain.

The old policy was to bear with the Afghans so far as we could reasonably do so, and to endeavour by kindness and conciliation to bring about friendly relations, gradually leading them to see that their interests and ours did not conflict. Of late, however, we have seemed to think that we understand the interests of the Afghans better than they do themselves. We appear to think that we can, in short, force our policy on them without their taking offence at such conduct.

What are we to gain by going to war with the Ameer? Can we dethrone him without turning the mass of his countrymen against us? Can we follow the policy of 1838-39 without, in all probability, incurring similar results? If we succeed in driving Shere Ali out of Cabul, whom can we put in his place? And how are we to insure the maintenance of our own creature on the throne, except by occupying the country? And when is such an occupation to terminate?

I have no doubt that we can clear the defiles and valleys of Afghanistan from end to end of their defenders, and that no force of Afghans could stand against our troops when properly brought to bear against them. The country, however, consists of mountain ranges for the most part broken up into rugged and difficult plateaux, where brave men, standing on the defensive, have considerable advantages; and when we force such positions we cannot continue to hold them.

The cost of invading such a country will prove very great, and the means for so doing must be drawn from elsewhere. The country held by the Ameer can afford neither the money nor the transport nor, even, the subsistence in adequate quantity for the support of the invading army. It is impossible to foresee the end of such a war, and, in the meantime, its prosecution would utterly ruin the finances of India.

Such are the political and military considerations which lead me to raise my voice against the present policy towards Ameer Shere Ali. Are not moral considerations also very strong against such a war?

Have not the Afghans a right to resist our forcing a Mission on them, bearing in mind to what such Missions often lead, and what Burnes's Mission in 1836 did actually bring upon them?

I have heard it contended that no nation has a right to isolate itself, in this way, and refuse to have intercourse with its neighbours. This may be a reasonable objection among civilised nations, but ought not to apply, I submit, between civilised Governments on the one hand and barbarous peoples on the other.

No doubt, Ameer Shere Ali has aggravated his offence by the mode in which he has resisted our overtures, more particularly in the threat of his Mir Akhor at Ali Musjid to shoot Major Cavagnari, if he did not turn back. But we should not bear too hardly on the Ameer on this account. I have no doubt that if we promise to give up forcing a Mission on him he would make any apology that we could reasonably call for. I urge that we were wrong, in the outset, in our policy towards the Ameer in many instances which could be pointed out, and therefore, ought not to be over hard on him in accepting his excuses. I insist that there will be no real dishonour to us in coming to terms with him; whereas, by pressing on him our own policy, we may incur most serious difficulties, and even disasters.

The last telegrams from India are that three considerable bodies of troops are to be concentrated, one at Quetta, one at Thall, on the river Koorum, and the third in reserve at Mooltan, as what are called 'precautionary measures.' I should call them very offensive measures. The same impulses which have brought us into the present complications and troubles will almost certainly lead us to still more decisive movements, unless very speedily checked by the people of England.

Yours faithfully,

LAWRENCE.

Stonehouse, St. Peter's, Isle of Thanet, Sept. 27.

Such a letter was a trumpet-call to the conscience of the country. 'You have given them a shot between wind and water,' said his friend, Captain Eastwick, to him on the morning on which it appeared. The effect was instantaneous. It was shown by the abuse showered upon him in the speeches of platform orators, by anonymous and threatening letters, by the almost savage articles of the Ministerial press, no less than by the private letters of sympathy which came pouring in upon him from men of every shade of political opinion, by the approving articles which appeared in the unattached as well as the Liberal portion of the press, and by the numerous letters to the 'Times' written by men who had always put principle above party, and morality above expediency—men like Lord Shaftesbury, Lord Grey, and Sir Charles Trevelyan. The influence of the leading journal

was, unfortunately, at that time given in support of the aggressive policy. But, as usual in matters of the first moment, it opened its columns freely and fairly to the chief disputants on either side of the question; and the letters written to it by men like Lord Lawrence, Lord Grey, Sir John Adye, Sir Charles Trevelyan on one side, and by Sir James Stephen, Sir Henry Havelock, and General Hamley on the other, have, since, been published in a separate volume.

Nor was Lord Lawrence content merely to write letters or to hold conferences with his friends, private and political, upon this burning matter. Finding that the papers which it was supposed by some credulous people might in some measure justify our conduct, were still withheld by Government; that military preparations were proceeding apace; and that Lord Lytton was disposed to go to war even in advance of them, he became Chairman of a Committee composed of men of every phase of political opinion, and especially of men who were strong in their Indian experience and reputation. Its chief object was to bring pressure upon the Government to postpone the actual commencement of hostilities till explicit orders had been sent from home to that effect, till the papers had been produced, and till the Ameer should have had one chance more of making an apology or an explanation. If only Justice were done, Lord Lawrence thought that explanations and apologies would not be all on one side.

On November 9, Lord Beaconsfield had startled his colleagues and his supporters hardly less than his opponents, by the announcement at the Mansion House, that the war which was about to begin had been undertaken not to punish the Ameer for his reception of the Russian and his refusal to receive an English mission, but for a rectification of boundary, for the substitution, as he called it, of a scientific for a haphazard frontier. The name was his own, but the idea, I believe, was General Colley's.

Early in December, Parliament met to consider the question. But it was too late. The conclusion was foregone. We had invaded Afghanistan, had beaten down, as Lord Lawrence said we should, all resistance, and had driven the Ameer, who had written that most touching letter on Lord Mayo's death, from his country to die in misery and



in exile. In vain were the abounding knowledge and authority of Lord Lawrence, the experience of Lord Northbrook so recently gathered upon the spot, the official weight and position of Lord Halifax, the independence of Lord Grey, the cool judgment and high morality of Lord Derby and Lord Carnarvon, brought to bear upon the question. They could not undo what had been done, even if they could have hoped, by weight of argument, to influence the serried ranks of those who were prepared, under all circumstances, to vote as they were bidden. The utmost that they could do, from a practical point of view, was to urge the Government to as early and as equitable a conclusion of the war as possible.

That conclusion, or rather a conclusion of some kind, soon came. We had shattered the Government of Shere Ali—the only strong Government that was possible in Afghanistan—into pieces. We had prepared a new series of civil wars for his unhappy country, and it was necessary before we could retire, either with decency or safety, behind our new 'scientific' frontier, to find somebody to put in his place, a man who would come into our terms, and who, by the mere fact of doing so, must make it impossible, when once we had retired, that he should rule the country with vigour, even if he could manage to retain his life. Yakub Khan, 'the ill-starred wretch,' the persecuted son of Shere Ali, lay readiest to our hand. The treaty of Gundamuck was, of course, readily, or even greedily, signed by him; and the two objects of the war, the permanent stationing of an English embassy at Cabul, and the permanent possession of a scientific frontier, were secured—secured, that is, for a month or two.

There were universal rejoicings among those who had promoted the war over a victory which had been so cheaply purchased; and Lord Lawrence was proved, by the result, to be doubly wrong, wrong in his premises and wrong also in his conclusions. Was he wrong, and how did he regard the treaty? 'I fear,' he said, 'that it can end in nothing but evil to us.' And when he heard that, by one of its articles, it was stipulated that General Cavagnari should remain with his escort at Cabul, 'they will all be murdered,' he exclaimed, 'every one of them.' And they were mur-

dered, every one of them, and the very notion of having an embassy at Cabul, and of retaining the 'scientific frontier,' were, ultimately, abandoned for ever by those who had started them. But another war was necessary; and a proclamation that we should hang upon the scaffold those who fought against us for their hearths and homes was deemed to be necessary; and a winter at Cabul was necessary, during a large portion of which our troops were penned in their fortified camp; and a pitched battle at Maiwand was necessary, in which, for almost the first time in British history, a large English army was defeated in the open field, and put to flight by these despised Afghans; and when General Roberts's brilliant march and victory enabled us to flatter ourselves that we had wiped out the memory of our disgrace, it was necessary for us to find or to make another king, and we fished out a Russian pensioner, whom we straightway put upon the throne, to oppose Russian aggression!

But Lord Lawrence was not destined to have the infinite pain of seeing his worst forebodings fulfilled, or the infinite satisfaction of seeing the unrighteous policy reversed. As long ago as the summer of the preceding year there had been those about Lord Lawrence who had begun to have vague fears about him. He had often told his friend Captain Eastwick that he felt his days were numbered, and some of those who saw most of him think that he might then have passed away quietly to his rest, had not his energies been once more aroused by the thought that there was still something for him to do in the world. Once more, perhaps—as I have ventured to suppose may have been the case in his earlier life, when he seemed to be at the point of death—the thought may have occurred to him that

... Something ere the end,  
Some work of noble note may yet be done  
Not unbecoming men who strove with gods.

At all events, he seemed to take a new lease of life from the moment when he heard of the turning back of Cavagnari's mission, and determined manfully to throw himself into the breach, if, haply, he might still stop the Afghan war.

Throughout that autumn and the early winter, Lord Lawrence worked away at his self-imposed mission with his old unconquerable energy. He was able to dine out occasionally; he saw much of his friends; and it was my happiness during these few months, on several occasions, to have lengthened conversations with him. He paid one flying visit to Edinburgh, and another to Manchester on business, accompanied in each case by his ever-faithful companion, who rarely let him go out of her sight, and never left him for more than an hour or two together, except on one occasion, when she was summoned to Windsor to receive the Order of the Crown of India from the hands of the Queen.

One day, early in June, he ventured out in a heavy rain, and caught a chill which settled heavily on the weaker organs of his body. Partially recovering, he insisted on going down, on the 19th of the month, to the House of Lords, that he might take part in the debate on the Indian Budget. His eldest son, John, who usually attended him on these occasions, happened to be otherwise engaged, and there was difficulty in finding anyone to accompany him. 'Don't send for Eastwick,' he said, 'for he is sure to come, whatever it costs him.' 'It is a speech,' said Captain Eastwick when it was reported to him, 'which I value more than a thousand pounds.' Lord Lawrence went down to the House, but he proved to be quite unequal to the exertion. He had prepared his speech with more than usual care. In fact, it had been a great labour to him. But his voice was almost inaudible, and, to his great distress, he was unable to say much that he had wished. He was able, however, to deliver a protest against the repeal of the cotton duties, which he thought to be a needless remission of revenue made at the wrong time, and made also in the interest of the English manufacturers, rather than of India. He also denounced the new license tax as an impost which pressed too heavily on the poorer classes. On his return, very late, to his home he looked exceedingly fatigued and exhausted. He had been so anxious to hear the whole debate that he would not leave the House of Lords to get dinner, and had afterwards driven home in a hansom cab, arriving thoroughly chilled from the night air, after the heated atmosphere in which he had been

for so many hours. It was his last visit to the House of Lords.

On the following morning, Sunday, he fell asleep almost immediately after breakfast—a very unusual thing with him—and he was unable to go to church. His wife stayed at home with him, and though she then little thought how soon the conflict was to be fought and the victory won, she happened to read aloud to him a sermon of Robertson's on the 'Victory over Death,' with which he seemed greatly struck. He brightened up in the afternoon, conversed with the large family party who were staying in the house, and was able to receive his friends as usual.

On Monday, he was rather better, and was able to attend to business, but, on Tuesday morning, a strange drowsiness came on, which never again quite left him. He fell asleep after breakfast, but insisted on going down, at noon, to a business meeting in the City. During his absence, Lady Lawrence seized the opportunity of going, unknown to him, to Dr. Kidd, and telling him of the symptoms. Dr. Kidd thought them serious, and wished to see him; but when Captain Eastwick, on Lord Lawrence's return, urged him to send for a doctor, he only said, with a pleasant smile, 'I see my wife has been putting you up to this; there is no need for it.' In the afternoon, he was able to see some friends—Dr. Kennedy, his brother-in-law, among the number—and they even arranged to go together to the House of Lords on the following Thursday. During all that night, his wife watched by his bedside. He was several times sick and very drowsy.

On Wednesday morning, he was too weak to leave his bed, but he seemed to enjoy having the newspapers read to him. He spoke little, and then only to ask for water. Everything in the shape of food was rejected, and the strong remedies ordered by Dr. Kidd produced hardly any amelioration of the symptoms.

On Thursday morning, he just asked what news there was in the papers; and this was the last question on public affairs which he was to put to anyone. From that time till about 10.30 P.M. on Friday, he was engaged with the last enemy, who was no 'king of terrors' to him.

On the Friday morning, those who had clung most to hope

saw that the end was drawing near. The few absent members of his family who were within reach were summoned to his side. The once strong man lay helpless on his bed, seldom opening his eyes and, apparently, unable to speak or to recognise anyone. 'Do you know me?' whispered his wife. 'To my last gasp, my darling,' he replied quite audibly; and, as she bent down to give him her last kiss, she felt the last pressure of his lips and hands. 'I am so weary;' such were the words which those who stood around his bed heard the most indefatigable of workers murmuring to himself as he was entering the land where the weary are at rest.

So lived and so died John Lawrence.

THE END.

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